

THE
Reformed Monastery;
OR,
The LOVE OF
JESUS.

A sure and short, pleasant and easie
way to HEAVEN.

IN
Meditations, Directions, and
Resolutions to Love and Obey
JESUS unto Death.

In two parts.

The second Edition Revised and Enlarged.

L O N D O N,
Printed for Henry Brome, at the Gun in
S. Paul's Church-yard, the West-End.
MDCLXXVIII.

Hereby perceiue we the Love of God because he
layd down his life for us. 1. John 3. 16.



Amor meus Crucifixus est — S. Ignatius
The Love of Christ constraineth us. 2. Cor. 5 & 14

F. H. Van. Houten

Ms. Finley P 7-40.

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MDCLXXVIII.

THE

Reformed Monastery

OF

Imprimatur.

Antonius Saunders,
Reverendissimo in Christo
Patri ac Domino Domino
GILBERTO Archiepiscopo
CANT. & Sacris Domestico.

Ex. A. Lambeth.
Febr. 16. 1671.

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LONDON

Printed for Henry Broom, at the Gun in
St. Pauls Church-yard, the West-End.
MDCCLXXIII

TO THE
Right Reverend Father in God

JOHN.

Lord Bishop of Oxford.

My LORD,

I Is not in regard of my
Obligations to you, though
I own them with grate-
ful acknowledgments; 'tis not in
regard of your late most deserved
advancement, though I heartily
rejoyce at it: 'Tis in regard of
your intrinsick Goodness, that this
Dedication begs your acceptance,
and humbly offers it self to you.
Before Lordship and Paternity
were added to your Honourable
Titles, you was intituled to this
book: your Dignities being dig-

A 3 nified

The Epistle Dedicatory.

nified by you. I considered not
their eminency, but the eminency
of your Vertue and Piety. I know,
My Lord, that you aim at a better
reward than this World can give;
but that a great light set on a high
place cannot be hid from the eyes
of Men, Angels alone should re-
joyce in the brightness of yours:
you shun praise as much as you de-
serve it: you neither desire nor
want any thing of Fame. But,
My Lord, I wanted a living ex-
ample of a sincere and devout lover
of JESUS to exemplifie my
Discourse: and though (God be
praised) many more might be
found in this Church, yet you are
one of the fairest and most attra-
ctive: insomuch that though it
be easier to write than to do well,
yet a better Pattern of a Religious
Life

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Life might be drawn from your actions than from my directions.

My Lord, I have just cause to fear that I have indulged my genius too far, and perhaps some will think that I would have Godliness to be Shorn, and Devotion a Recluse from the World, which is far from my thoughts or desires: though I must confess that at first I intended a much different and less defective Treatise on this so good a subject had not other necessary helps as well as abilities been wanting. However at the best I could have added nothing to such persons as your Lordship. The Holy flames of Divine Love that burn in your heart have too much light and fervency to have received any increase from me: and therefore I have not aimed at any

A 4 thing

The Epistle Dedicatory.

thing higher than only to assist the weak and fix the inconsiderate. But, My Lord; though I cannot in the least profit you by this my poor labour, yet its being own'd by you may be very advantagious to me. Your Reverend and much Honoured name will not only credit and recommend my Book, but also promote its design of winning affectionate Servants and Lovers to JESUS. This I know you will rejoyce to do: Wherefore in presenting my Book to your Lordship, I humbly beg your blessing on it and its Author, Who is with due respect and affection,

Your Lordships most dutiful

and most humble Servant

L^d Luke Braulien. L. B.
Chap. to Judge Jefferys.

THE P R E F A C E.

TIs probable that they, who these many years, have cried out Popery (till they made way for it to come) upon every thing they liked or understood not, will start and think that their fears are come upon them, at the sight of the first Title-page: and possibly our Lay-Abbots will also be frighted at it, as though the dispossess'd Coenobites were coming again to lay claim to their old Mansions and fat Indowments. For my part I wish that theirs may be but pannick terrors: yet withal, I wish they might so far affect them, as to make the first have a greater value for that Reformed Religion, and purer worship which then they would certainly lose;

The PREFACE.

and the last pay Tithes Conscienciously out of those estates, which then they would be forced to resign. And yet I may, and do assure them, that if they will read not only the Title, but the Book also, it will certainly cure them of their fears, if it works no better change upon them: for its design is not to alter the established Religion, but to make us more devout and sincere in the profession thereof; nor yet to enrich any persons with temporal estates, but to make us gather treasures in heaven, and set our affections on things above.

That the age we live in, is greatly depraved, is no observation of mine; there are almost as many that complain of it, as there are that contribute to the increasing of its wickedness. 'Tis in every mans mouth that vertue being disgraced, vice is countenanced, and that the numerousness of its votaries, makes it now impudent, as well as fashionable. Therefore it should be no difficult matter, to perswade those that have any sence of Religion, or longing
after

The PREFACE.

after its rewards, that they ought not to conform themselves to this present evil world, but chuse a better pattern to live by. And the truth is, it matters not much, whether these be worse than the former times; for the way to life hath all along been streight and narrow, and found and followed but by few: as that to destruction wide and spacious, and yet crouded by the many. Good men have always lived in a perverse and crooked generation: So that if it be now, as it hath ever been, those that will enter into life, must follow the narrow path, though they have but few fellow-travellers: and if it be worse, they must walk with the greater care and wariness. However it be, the difference must needs be very great, betwixt the lives and works of those, whose reward and condition will be so vastly different at last. And therefore whoever will go to heaven, had need keep at a great distance from that world which lieth in wickedness, and take a much contrary course, to those many who go to destruction.

But:

THE PREFACE.

But how then? Must we retire into Thebais, with the Fathers of the desert? Must we confine our selves to the solitude of a Monastick Cell? Or shall we become Quakers, and profess the sullenness of Melancholy Fanaticks? Why, truly in Popish Countries, the Cloister hath ingrossed the name of Religion, and they that would be, or be thought to be devout beyond others, do usually put on a Fryers hood, and imbrace the Rule of some Religious Order: and amongst us Puritanism hath usurped the Name of Godliness; and some who, in truth or in pretence, abhor looseness, or are reclaimed from a vicious life, will too often forsake not the World, but the Church; as it were to preserve the strictness of a severer vertue, in the Society of a Separated Brother hood. 'Tis not to be doubted but that long before S. Augustine, and even from the beginning, there hath been Civitas dei, & Civitas mundi, children of light, and children of this world: or to use the modern distinctions
the

The PREFACE.

the Godly, and the Wicked, Regular and Secular persons. Not because some have made new vows, wore distinct habits, or chosen new guides, and separated from the Church : but because some have lived after the flesh ; some after the Spirit ; that is, some have followed Gods revealed will, some onely their own, some have obeyed the precepts of Christ, and too many their own lusts and humors. However I would not make any exprobrations against either Monks or Schismatics by disobliging truths : rather commend what is praise worthy in them ; because I would have, and 'tis every Christians duty, to be really devout, mortified and precise, without entering the Cloister or the Conventicle.

For indeed I am somewhat jealous, and not without reason, that the ingaging men to be Religious and Vertuous, by other considerations besides their Christian duty, hath done some prejudice to Religion ; because now there be some that fanſie self-denial and contempt of the world

The PREFACE.

world to belong only to Friars, and others, that to abstain from swearing and drunkenness, is only the part of a Puritan: Whereas Christianity binds those duties on all its Professors, and every one, by his Baptismal vow is bound to perform them; though he doth not submit himself to the Rule of S. Francis, or the dictates of the Assembly.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things, saith the Apostle, they are all parts of our duty. Whatever is good in it self, or any ways a means to make us good, is commanded or recommended in holy Scripture, is contained in the Christian Rule: wherefore I say the Christian Professor designing to attain higher degrees of holiness, the highest pitch of Christian perfection attainable in this life, needs not separate from.

The PREFACE.

from the Church, nor make new vows nor wear distinct habits : but only mind seriously, and sincerely discharge the obligations which he lies under, in being a Disciple, and a Servant of the Holy JESUS.

My design therefore is not to Incloister particular persons, but to make a large Monastery of the whole Commonwealth, at least to make every family a

Vellem universos Christianos ita vivere, ut qui nunc soli Religiosi vocantur, parum Religiosi viderentur.

School of Vertue and Piety, and every man an Ascetick and strict liver : wishing heartily with Erasmus that they, who hitherto, have been called Precise and Religious, by way of appropriation, might justly lose that name, by the more exemplary lives of all other Christians.

But though it be my wish, it is not my hope in the least, to see any such thing come to pass, by means of this little volume. Many much bigger and better have not been able to effect it. They that will

not

The PREFACE.

not hear Moses and the Prophets, nay, Christ the Lord himself, will be far enough from being perswaded by the meanest of his servants: And where the Text it self is not regarded, no Comment can signifie much. I mean that if the Holy Religion we own, be not able to reform our lives; if the Gospel which is here preached and professed in purity, doth not make us holy, 'tis in vain to expect any other instruments should prevail. But yet our indeavours ought not to be wanting; it may not be in vain to diversifie Christian instructions; severall ways of perswasion may affect severall persons: and perhaps that which to day is slighted, will to morrow make a deep impression. However it is more or less the duty of everyone of us, with great S. Paul to trie all means that by any means we may save some: at least that we may save our selves; that if those arguments which we think most forcible cannot convince others, they may may at least move us to take the better heed, that after we have preached

The PREFACE.

preached to others, we our selves be not cast-awa ys.

Now to this end (having observed how much in all cases, men will do and suffer for love) I have thought nothing would more conduce, than to make a Christian love God with a sincere and devout affection; a devout love being undoubtedly not only the best part, but also the best instrument of true Religion; an irreconcilable enemy to sin; a friend, or rather a nurse to all holy vertues.

No enticement could have drawn penitent Magdalen to any of her former sins, whilest in the fervency of her love, she washed her Saviours feet with her tears; and 'tis known by experience that when reading, meditation, the sight of a dying friend, or any such thing, hath softened a mans heart into a religious temper, temptations will be then so far from prevailing, that they durst not so much as appear before him. But when he returns to mind earthly things, and hath his thoughts taken up again with the concerns of this present life, he finds that his spiritual

The PREFACE.

ritual strength decays, by the same proportions that his love becomes cold, and he grows indevout again.

Love is the Queen, if not the fountain of passions, the great mover and governor of actions and affections: could we keep the fire of Divine Love always burning in our breasts, it would be the most powerful and best instrument of Holy-living; it would make self-denial and the yoke of Christ easie, it would make acts of vertue and Religion pleasant; and it would make us delight in pleasing God, as much as we naturally do in pleasing our selves. Therefore I have made it my aim and design in the following Pages, to seize upon the affections: to inkindle in the hearts of Christians the heavenly flames of the love of God. To that end, I have represented the more general benefits of God to mankind, and especially that of Redemption, by the greatest demonstration of love that ever was given, the death of the Blessed J E S U S: which, if duly considered, would be an irresistible motive

The PREFACE.

to love him. I have shewed the power, the pleasure, and the great advantages of love; and I have used devout meditations and ejaculations, as it were to transport our souls to heaven by love, for to adore that God, whom love brought down from thence to save us. 'Tis certain that most of them that perish, perish for want of consideration; and I have heard dying men wonder at themselves, how they could be so stupid, as not to mind those things which are of an infinite concern, and should rather take up all our thoughts and our cares, than be neglected or forgot one only moment. Israel doth not understand, my people doth not sider, Isa. 1. 3.

Love may be said to be that fire which God would have always to burn upon his Altar, Lev. 6. 12. that is, in our hearts, which are his Temple, where the sacrifices of good works and the incense of devotion should always be offered to him: now that sacred fire must have fuel to entertain it; it must be nourished by reading good books,
and

THE PREFACE.

and especially by frequent and pious meditations. Wherefore I have endeavoured as much as I could to feed those holy flames, by representing things as they are; and I would have every Christian, seriously and often to consider, what God is, what he hath done, what he doth, and what he will do for us, if we love him sincerely: as also, what we are, whence we come, whither we go, and how easie it is for us to be eternally happy, if we will set our affections upon God, who deserves them so infinitely. Doubtless inconsideration is the cause why God is not loved! It is not possible men could resist the charms of his love, if they would open the eyes of their mind and of their faith to view them!

But how few is there that mind attentively their obligations to love God? how few that seriously ponder how much it is their duty and their interest to love him heartily, who is infinitely lovely in himself, and infinitely good to us? or rather, how fully is the prophesie fulfilled, Iniquity shall

The PREFACE.

shall abound and the love of many shall wax cold, *Mat. 24. 12.* To how many Christians might our Blessed Saviour now say, as once to the Jews, I know you, that you have not the love of God in you, *John 5. 42.* How justly might now S. Paul complain, all men seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's, *Phil. 2. 21.* And how justly might our Blessed Lord, the great lover of men, complain in the words of his Apostle, I will gladly spend and be spent for you; (or rather, I have gladly spent, and been spent for you) though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved, *2 Cor. 12. 15.*

This want of Divine Charity, is a very sad and general evil amongst us Christians, in these worst of times: and I have observed, that even amongst them that hope for heaven, the major part go no farther in their love, than only to desire pardon and salvation, without seeking to make any returns suitable to those undeserved and incomprehensible mercies. Against

THE PREFACE.

gainst so much stupidity and ingratitude, I have opposed the following Treatise of Divine Love, or the Love of JESUS, which I hope will help to rekindle or at least stir up the holy fire in some Christian souls, by the argument it self, if by no other means. Whilest my Reader fixeth his mind on this most excellent and delightful subject, his own thoughts will improve my considerations, and many better may be suggested to him. And if any ways, I can occasion his spiritual advantage, and the glory of my Blessed Lord, I have attained my aim. And now have no more to say by way of Preface, but that if I have been so unhappy as to write any thing contrary to the Doctrine of the Church; I disown and retract it before hand, and would blot it out with my blood: as for particular persons, who may find fault with any thing herein, I desire them to pass it by. It matters not much, if they like not every passage and expression; if they do but follow what they judge to be good, and approve

The PREFACE.

*approve my design, and love Jesus with
all their hearts ; it will be enough for
their profit and my satisfaction.*

He that loveth not, knows not
God, for God is Love, 1 John 4. 9.

The



T H E

Reformed Monastery ;

Or, the Love of

J E S U S.

The Introduction.



I were as easie to find out the bottomless depth of the inexhaustible fountain of the Divine Bounry, as to tell the Streams which run from it ; Gods mercies are over all his works, and all things that are made, are a demonstration as much of his goodness as of his being. I will not therefore undertake to number what is innumerable,

E

or

2 The Reformed Monastery; Or,
or to express what we cannot so much as
comprehend: but only insist briefly upon
some of the most general benefits of God to
mankind, and in the representing of them,
endeavour to make us read our duty, and
to inflame our hearts with love.

CHAP. I.

*Of the general Benefits of God to man-
kind, and first of Creation.*

1. **I**T is God that hath made us and not we
our selves, we owe him our very be-
ing; thine hands have made and fashioned me:
(saith David) thine eyes did see my substance be-
ing yet imperfect, and in thy book were all my
members written. Psal. 119. 73. Let us say there-
fore with the same Prophet, I will praise
thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:
Psal. 134. 16. and let us with him, fall down
and kneel before the Lord our Maker. You know
that by the Laws of God and of all Nations,
there is an indispensable obligation upon
all children to love and honour their Pa-
rents because they brought them into the
world: now certainly the obligation double
upon every man, in respect to his Father
which is in heaven; for our natural parents

were

The Love of J E S U S.

3

were but second causes under him, his own power it was that form'd and created us : they engendred our mortal bodies only, he is the Father of spirits, he himself gave being to our immortal souls. Therefore let every man pay to his Maker those duties he would expect from his child : *If I am a Father (saith God) where is mine honour ?* Mal. 1. 6. If from our heavenly Father we have received our life and being, let us pay that respect, and love and obedience to him, which thereby are become his due.

But there is yet more in this ; Creation is not a transient act ; the same power that once gave us our being, doth still exert it self in the continuation thereof. When a child is born, he subsists by himself, his parents need not take any care, that he returns not to his pristine condition : but we have the same dependance upon God in our preservation as we had in our creation ; should he withdraw his Almighty hand, we should return to our first nothing ; *in him we live and move, and have our being ;* Therefore we are the more bound to serve and love him, that he not only made us to be ; but gives us, as it were, a new being every moment, by continuing our life and duration by that Almighty will, whereby he effected our first production

Now if we consider further, not onely that God made us, but what he made us, it will

4 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

inforce those bonds of duty, which Creation tied upon us. For it was in our Makers power, either to make us vile and abject as the vilest of beasts, or to deny us those faculties and abilities, which are most honourable and most useful to our nature : but he made us Men, the most wonderful of his creatures! in us he joyned what heaven and earth had most excellent, an immortal Spirit, created after his image, with the most elaborated, the most perfect of material things: Take a view of the marvellous organs of thy senses, of the curious contrivance of those joints and ligaments which unite thy several members, of those various and delicate channels which contain thy blood and spirits ; in a word of all the parts and passions of thy body, which are all made for necessity and comeliness ; and then admire the great goodness, as well as wisdom of thy Creator ; and say with the Psalmist , that thou art *fearfully and wonderfully made*, and that Gods works are *very marvellous*.

After this let thy thoughts dive deeper, and consider thine interior senses ; the mysterious union of thy soul and body, with the beauty of that Divine Light which we call Reason ; thy memory, thy will, thine understanding, which are the faculties of thy precious soul, which is not only created after Gods image ; but is capable and desirous to enjoy him : and then see
how

how numerous, or rather innumerable are the benefits which God hath bestowed upon us in our creation, and how just it is that we should love him, that *we should glorifie God, in our Body and in our Spirits, which are Gods.*

CHAP. II.

How much we are obliged to God for our Preservation.

Preservation comes next to be considered; a benefit of very large extent, and well deserving that rank, the Church hath placed it in, in making it the subject of our daily thanksgiving; for ever since man changed the impenetrable armour of Original Righteousness, for a thin covering of fig-leaves, he became so defenseless, and yet exposed to so many sharp and wounding arrows, that should not Divine Protection interpose for to shelter and secure him, his temporal Life would be a true and a sad Emblem of Eternal Death. It appears by the history of patient *Job*, that if we were not fenced about with the hedge of a gracious providence, we should find that all creatures conspire our vexation and
B 3 ruine.

6 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

ruine. God had no sooner broke the inclosure; but afflictions crowded in so fast upon that happy man, that in a short time there remained nothing of his former prosperity, but a bare and bitter remembrance, to make the sense of his present misery more grievous. There is no man but is exposed to all the greatest Calamities that ever besel any of the Sons of *Adam*; and there is none able by his own power, to defend himself against the least of them. Fortune and accidents sport themselves (if I may so speak) with our goods and estates; Moths fret our garments, rust cankers our mettals, thieves break through and steal our riches or else *they make to themselves wings and fly away*. Besides their own corruptibility which of it self would consume them, they are exposed to so many hazards, that it would be as impertinent, as 'tis impossible to number all the ways and means, whereby men are afflicted with losses, and brought to poverty: only from hence we may justly infer, that the same God *who gives us all things richly to enjoy*, must all secure them in our possession, or else we certainly lose them.

If we look on our selves, we shall like the Prophets man in *Dathan*, 2 Kings 6. see armed enemies on all sides of us; our spiritual enemies are many, strong, and full of rage and malice; and yet we have no
defence

defence against them : but that God makes his heavenly host, to wait on our safety, incamps his Angels about us, to be an invisible guard against our invisible enemies, and not only so, but to secure us also from thousands of sudden and sad accidents, which might every moment befall us. All creatures are now furnished with a sting wherewith they may either vex or kill us. The elements and all compounded bodies, the air we breath, and the food that nourisheth us, all things in nature, and all things in chance, may become our tormentors or murderers. Nay, we carry swords and daggers in our own bosoms ; we have within our selves the matter of all sorts of distempers ; not one joint in our bodies but may be afflicted with the gout ; Not one humour, but may overflow its banks, and quench the light of Reason, or the fire of Life ; Not one pore or part within or without, but may unexpectedly, at all times, and in all places, become an entrance to death and sorrow. In the midst of so many and great dangers, it were impossible for us to stand one moment, but that God defends us under his wings and keeps us safe under his feathers, Psal. 90. as the Psalmist speaks, and so the blessings of immunity, which most men slight, or overlook, are never enough to be acknowledg'd, but deserve the thanks of a whole life. *We dwell under the defence of the most high, and abide under the shadow.*

3 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

*shadow of the Almighty : therefore let us set
our love upon him and glorifie him.*

CHAP. III.

Of the positive Blessings of this life.

THe Positive Blessings of this life, are now to be exposed to view ; but of them, I may use the words of the Psalmist, *If I would reckon and speak of them, they are more in number than can be numbred, Psal. 40.* Health and strength, and comeliness, with industry and learning, are shared among the sons of men in several proportions : and so are good friends and a good name, peace, plenty and pleasures; any one of those single, might make a rich portion for one man, for each, within it self contains many rich and precious blessings : yet oftentimes, God unites all, or most of these together, *to crown us with loving kindness and tender mercies, Psal. 103.* The works of creation, and the works of providence are not more numerous, than the graces and gifts of God to mankind ; any one that should seriously meditate upon this subject, would find it multiply and increase almost to immensity,
and

and would be forced to break off with the exclamation of *David*; *Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou so regardest him?* Psal. 8. 4. God renews his mercies to us every day together with our lives; every hour, we eat of the fatness of his house, drink of the river of his pleasure, Psal. 36. and receive the sweet emanations that flow continually from the fountain of life.

But of those benefits which God pours open hands upon us, how many are there that pass unregarded! we usually mind, not what we receive, but what we desire. Let heaven rain Manna never so thick upon us, if we wish for Quails, Angels food shall be unsavory, and perhaps distastful. They that long for great and well covered tables, find no relish in their daily bread; they that pursue after wealth, look not on the blessings of competency; they that aspire to honour, receive health, food and raiment, rather with a disdainful anger, than with thankfulness; all the favours we receive from God, are unobserved or slighted as long as he doth not gratifie our humour with what we desire, and even those gifts whereof we are most sensible, are soon laid in oblivion; an hours pain will cause many longer pleasures to be forgotten; and if God sends evil upon us only for one day, it makes us forget the many good things,

10 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
which we for many years received from him. This I say, because many mens unsatiableness and ingratitude makes them overlook most of Gods blessings; despise what they have, and value only what they have not; and so murmur and complain when they should give thanks. But whoever shall diligently observe all the gracious distributions of that God, who always giveth to all men, being debtor to none; all the supplies and comforts we receive from him, will heartily say with the Psalmist, *O love the Lord all ye his Saints; and, O that men would therefore praise the Lord, for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he doth for the children of men; that they would exalt him in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the seat of the elders, Psal. 31. 107.*

CHAP. IV.

What returns we should make for temporal Blessings.

THose Benefits we have hitherto mentioned, we receive as we are men, and that, from the free goodness of our gracious God, we are his people, and the sheep of
of

of his pasture; we are, and we have nothing that is good, but it comes from him; he made us, he preserves us, and he provides for us: therefore, *O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise, be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name.* It was Jacob's vow, that if God would keep him, and give him food and raiment, whilst he sojourned in Haran, then the Lord should be his God: Now what was his vow should be our resolution and practice; God feeds, and cloaths, and defends us, therefore ought he to be our God; That is, we ought to own him for such by faithful service and hearty obedience. Therefore, 1. Let us pay our bounteous Benefactor, the just and easie tribute of Praise and Thanksgiving, for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life. 2. Let us set apart daily, some of that time which he gives us, for acts of Worship and Religion. 3. Let us honour the Lord with our substance; either in secret charities or publick offerings, paying him an acknowledgment, that he is our Landlord; and lastly, let us apply our selves to observe his Laws, to do what pleaseth him; because we are not our own, we owe our selves to him, we are his, he gave us our being. These are acts of natural Religion, and them we owe to God, as he is our Creator and Benefactor.

CHAP. V.

*Of the mercies of Redemption, and first,
a consideration of the infinite miseries
we were redeemed from.*

NOW are to be considered the benefits we receive from God as we are sinners ; the mercies of our Redemption ; how God our Creator is become *JESUS*, our Saviour ; how after having given us many good things, he at last gave himself for us. And that we may the better understand the greatness of this unspeakable and Divine Mercy, let our meditation descend a while into that bottomless gulf of perdition, wherein we were plunged by nature, in this plain manner. Represent to thy self a man in *Job's* condition, having added to his ulcers and poverty all the saddest calamities that ever afflicted any man upon earth, especially the remorse and horrors of a guilty and tormented conscience, crying out of impatience and despair with *Cain*, *my pain is greater than I can bear*. This unhappy creature having for many years born the uneasy weight of his miseries,
linger'd

linger'd out a tedious and disconsolate life, is at last struck to the heart with a mortal wound and dies, and so passeth from temporal to eternal sorrows ; he falls into a lake of fire and brimstone, a place where there is nothing but woe and darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth ; where there is no company but of tormented and tormentors ; nothing to be seen but what is frightful, no voices to be heard but curses, shrieks and lamentations, where there is the absence of all good, and the presence of all evil ; where *men desire to die, and death flees away from them.*

This is the fulness of his misery, that it shall have no end, that he must dwell with everlasting burnings ; *their fire is not quenched, and their worm dies not.* If weeping but one tear every day, he might expect to be releas'd, after he had wept as much as would make an ocean, it would be some comfort ! but at the end of so many millions of years as would suffice to weep a Sea, his torments will be as far from ending as the first day they began : and if after this manner in process of time, he should shed tears enough to make many more seas, yet still it might be truly said, *this is but the beginning of sorrows* ; still there is an intolerable Eternity to come ; for after as many thousands of millions of years as tongue can express or heart comprehend ; Eternity

14 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

nity is nothing lessened; still it is what it was before, an abyfs of duration that can have no end; this excludes all comfort, this fills his soul with a woful despair, this is another hell in the midst of hell, which intrageth him, and perpetually tortures his mind, to think that there will be no end of his sufferings, that he can conceive no hope of being delivered: but that he must bear to all Eternity, what every moment is intolerable! O dreadful eternity, who can seriously think of thee and not tremble!

Now if thou dost ask for what reason this wretched creature is thus tormented, know that it is for sin; because his first parents broke the Law of their Creation, and he followed their footsteps; they involved him first in the guilt of a wicked rebellion against God, and afterwards by his own acts he made himself yet more criminal; by nature he was a *child of wrath*, and then he became so, yet more by his own transgressions; he was *sold under sin*, and then he became a willing slave to it; his own thoughts, words and works being evil, and that continually, he forsook God, and dishonoured him, and profest enmity against him, and opposed his depraved will to Gods Holy Will, and so became obnoxious to the infinite justice of God, which therefore justly inflicts this deserved punishment upon him.

And

And now, if knowing the reason, thou dost inquire after the person, who by being so unholy, is become so extremely unhappy; I could say with the Prophet, *thou art the man*, this is thy patrimony, as thou art a child of *Adam*; this thou art by nature: but the divine mercy hath rescued thee from this misery, and therefore I must say, *thou wert the man*, this must have been thy case, had not the Holy J E S U S workt thy Redemption by means as wonderful, as was his pity and charity.

But before I proceed, I must also propound one question. Two men are equally indebted, and equally unable to pay; the one is patiently forborn and at last freely acquitted, the other is cast into the dungeon, and a while after compassionately releast and set at liberty; I demand, is not he that never entred the prison, as much bound to love his generous creditor, as he that was delivered out of it? yes, doubtless, or rather more: because his debt is also forgiven, and yet he is freed from that trouble and sorrow, which his fellow debtor underwent. Why then, thy gracious Redeemer, by saving thee from the horrors and torments of Hell, hath laid on thee, at least as great obligations to love him, as if he had brought thee out of it, after thou hadst been long detained therein. Therefore I desire, thou wouldst bring thy thoughts back

16 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

back again to that unpleasant abode, and consider thy self as if thou wert shut up in that dismal dungeon, and then express what thou wouldst give to be releast, what thou wouldst do for him that should bring thee out of that horrible and bottomless pit.

I know that they that are afflicted with sharp pains and grievous sicknesses, would purchase health with all the wealth they have ; and I believe no reward would hire a man to hold his hand in the fire but for one hours time : therefore I doubt not but that, if it were in a mans power, he would give this, and a thousand more worlds, to be brought out of an ever burning furnace : and I am perswaded, that if thou wilt suffer thy fancy to be active in framing the black and dreadful scene of hellish horrors about thee, thou wilt then heartily say : Were I owner of the whole universe, I would joyfully give it, to come out of these ever-burning flames which torment my body, and to be freed from this never dying worm, the remorses of my guilty conscience, which torture my soul : but because I have nothing, freely would I give my self to him, that should bring me out of this woful place. O I would follow him any where, do any thing that he should command me, embrace his feet, kiss the ground they tread on, and give him all the demonstrations of a sincere and passionate Love !

Well

The Love of J E S U S. 17

Well, thy petition is granted, before'twas presented; the Love and Mercy of *J E S U S* hath prevented thy request, and distress: Now make good thy vows and resolutions; Love and Serve *J E S U S* thy Redeemer, and give thy self up wholly to him. I know that many may be good Christians, without being snatcht out of the fire, without these terrors and affrightments: but I am shewing what our condition had been without a Saviour, what is that gulf of perdition, whence *J E S U S* hath saved us, if we will be saved by him: and I mention these affrighting truths to perswade men; to be motives of an active and a vehement Love. For 'tis too observable, that few men seriously consider what *Redemption means*, what it was we were redeemed from, else they could not be so indevout, so disobedient, so unthankful to their Saviour. *S. Paul* supposing, as I do here, that without Christ we were already dead and perisht, makes it the reason of that *Constraining Love* which enabled him and other Primitive Christians, to suffer so patiently, and act so zealously for *J E S U S*; *The love of Christ* (saith he) *constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; as if he should say, we were certainly dead, irrecoverably lost, had not Christ died, to purchase life and salvation for us: therefore we cannot chuse but love him,*

18 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

him, and it is no wonder if that love be strong, and if we are governed and acted by it. That thou maist therefore love affectionately and live religiously, consider seriously that death, the misery of that condition wherein thou wert, and ever must have been, hadst thou not a *JESUS*, a merciful Saviour and Redeemer. I might add, that we were delivered from the power and slavery, as well as from the condemnation of sin: but this is included in the other, it being impossible to be saved from the wrath to come, without bringing forth fruits meet for repentance: and as it is mercy and grace on Gods part, so on ours, it is matter of duty and earnest indeavour, and must be the result and effect of our love, first that we offend not, and then that we serve diligently, and faithfully him that redeemed us from our vain conversation, and gave himself for us, that we being dead unto sin, might live unto righteousness.

CHAP

CHAP. VI.

How graciously and wonderfully we were redeemed.

A Further ingagement to love and obey will be to consider the manner how our redemption was effected, and the price that was paid for it, thus. The Blessed Son of God, the Second Person of the Ever glorious Trinity undertook that work himself which none else could perform : for us men, and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. In this act of his, miracles and mercies seem to vie one with another ; that the God of eternity should be born in time, that the Creator of all things should be the Son of a Creature ; that the most highest should abase himself to the low condition of a servant ; that God should become an infant, is a miracle of Love, which we can admire and adore, but never fully comprehend.

*In presepe jacet, sed
mandatum continet, ubi
jugis, sed angelos pastit.
Aug. Ser. de purific. 2.*

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20 *The Reformed Monastery, Or,*

The greatness of God is unsearchable, his excellencies and perfections are incomprehensible, he is infinitely good, powerful, wise, and holy: Man contrariwise, is in himself wicked and weak, ignorant, impure and miserable, there is so great a disproportion betwixt God and man, so

*Hæc est mensura amoris,
non solum quantum fecit
nos, quanta fecit pro
nobis, sed & quantillus
saculus est pro nobis.*

wide, so immense a distance, that nothing less than an infinite love could have filled up the gulf betwixt those two so different natures, and united

them into one person. 'Twas never seen that a shepherd would creep upon all four, and cover himself with a sheep-skin, to call his flock out of danger, and to expose himself for it: but *the good shepherd* did much more! When he came to *lay down his life* for his lost and wandering *sheep*, and gather them into his fold; he took on him, not only the likeness, but the very nature of them: he became *the Lamb of God*, that he might be the shepherd of mankind. Though he was infinitely more above man, then men are above beasts, yet he became *the Son of man*, that he might become the Saviour of men. 'Twas never seen that a Sovereign Prince would seek to reduce to loyalty the most abject of his rebellious subjects, by mixing blood with them,

uniting

uniting their families together : but behold the Supreme Monarch of heaven and earth contracts a near affinity with his ungrateful rebels, who are as vile and miserable, as they are criminal, that he may free them from their guilt, and win them to their duty and their happiness. Proud and wretched sinner ! thou wouldst be so far from entering into the kindred of meaner persons, those that are much thine inferiors, that thou canst hardly endure to be in their company : and behold, the most Glorious and Holy God, thine offended Sovereign, is become thy near relation, is become thy Brother, that he may win thine affections and become thy Saviour.

His life, all along, was a continuation of his great mercy and humility, *he went about doing good*, healing all manner of diseases Corporal and Spiritual, giving excellent instructions and great examples of vertue. But what we now consider, and what should most affect us, is, that for our sakes *he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*, all the time of his abode here below. At his first entrance into the world, he was degraded, even below the condition of the meanest infants, being born in a Stable and laid in a Manger ; eight days after he began *to be numbred among the transgressors*, receiving the bloody and painful Sacrament of Circumcision, which belonged only

22 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

only to sinners; in his youth he lived in poverty and obscurity, and was subject to his Parents; when he manifested himself to the world, then he perpetually endured the contradiction of sinners; besides that he lived upon alms, becoming poor for us, who was Lord of all: he wanted even time to eat what the charity of pious persons afforded him, and had not so much as a place where he might rest his head. He was tempted of Satan, that he might succour those that are tempted, he often watcht whole nights to Prayer, and was often faint with tiresome journeys, and hunger, and thirst: and what is yet worse, he was daily persecuted by ingrateful men, for whom he endured all this. They slandered him with false imputations of being a glutton and a wine-bibber; his kind and charitable affability in conversing with noted sinners, was made matter of accusation, as if he had consented to their evil deeds; his Divine Doctrine was derided, as if proceeding from madness; the miracles which he wrought in their behalf, were said to be done by sorcery, and packt with *Beelzebub*: and to all these disgraces and contumelies, they would often have added violence, and stoned him to death, had he not escaped out of their hands by a hasty flight.

Lord, thou hadst compassion on the multitudes, because they had followed thee
thru

three days, and had nothing to eat, Mar. 15. 32. and thou livedst above three and thirty years, waiting upon thy base and fugitive servants, who were become thine enemies, seeking to prevent their ruine, by the assiduity of thy care and kindness ! O sad ingratitude, that we should be so soon weary in serving thee, when thou wert so patient and indefatigable in acting and suffering for us, for our happiness and our salvation.

CHAP. VII.

A consideration of the Cross in its four dimensions.

BUt if we desire to be rooted and grounded in love, Eph. 3. 17. and to comprehend with all Saints the immense charity of the Son of God, *which passeth knowledge*, which infinitely exceedeth all Learning in profitableness and excellency, then measure the love of Christ, by the dimensions of his Cross, the breadth and the length, the depth and the height thereof, for therein love appears in its full extent, so that nothing can be added to it. That the eternal Son of God, would become our Brother,
by

24 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

by becoming Man, and would live in Poverty and Contempt, was very much : but that afterwards he would die for us, in that manner as he did, is the greatest wonder that ever the world saw. And indeed, there hapned more prodigies when he died, than at all other times of his humiliation; the Sun hid himself, darkness overspread the whole world; the earth shook, the stones and rocks were rent, the graves were opened, and the vail of the Temple was divided in twain; Nature seemed to be amazed to see her God suffer and die upon a Cross : *greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend, 'tis true man cannot possibly domore : I, but JESUS did much more, he was God, then he became man that he might die for his enemies. This is it, whereof S. Paul speaks, when he saith that it was never conceived or seen, how great are the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; we speak (saith he) the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which none of the Princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory : but as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither is it entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit. It appears that he speaks (not of the blis of heaven, but) of the crucifixion*

of our Blessed Saviour, which to the Jews was a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishness, and which neither the senses nor the reason of man could ever comprehend ; but, as a hidden mystery was made known to Christians, by the revelations of the all-knowing Spirit of God. To understand therefore as much as may be, this never fully understood and never enough admired love of our Redeemer, in dying for us, let us in the first place view the Breadth of his Cross ; that is, the variety of the torments he endured for us, in the last stage of his uneasy pilgrimage.

CHAP. VIII:

The Breadth of the Cross, or the manifold Sufferings of Christ for our Redemption.

WE may begin with the manner of his apprehension ; he was taken as if he had been a publick enemy to mankind a thief or a murtherer, with swords and staves, with rudeness and violence ; he was betrayed by one of his Disciples, forsaken by the rest, and then bound and dragg'd, from place to place by those he had in-

C

structed

26 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

structed and fed, and in whose behalf he had wrought miracles. He was called an impious blasphemer, and voted guilty of death, for confessing a great and necessary truth, that he was the only Son of God. Afterwards he was exposed a whole night to the indignities and mockeries of his insulting enemies; they spit upon his sweet and glorious face; they veiled him, and smote his head and buffeted him; and as if he had been a contemptible ideot, to be made sport withal, they bad him prophesie, ghes who gave him the blows. He was accused before the *Roman Pretor*, as being a lewd malefactor, a rebellious traitor who subverted the people, and forbad to pay tribute to *Cæsar*. From thence he was sent to King *Herod*, where he was set at nought, and abused by him and his Souldiers, and then sent back with scorn and contempt to *Pilate*. Afterwards *Barrabbas* a seditious murderer was preferred to him, and a loud clamor raised by the people, that he might be crucified and put to death. Then was he whipt before their eyes, tied to a post like a vile slave, and exposed to the servile rods, whiles they plough'd furrows upon his back, as the Prophet spake; the Souldiers took him, platted a Crown of thorns and prest it on his head, till the blood run of all sides of him; they beat him with canes and clubs, and put a reed instead of a scap-

rer in his hand, and when he was all over spitte and blood they brought out their mock-King, and *Pilate* presented him to the people, and said, *behold the man*, thinking to move them to pity, by so sad a spectacle ; but nothing less than his death would satisfie their enraged cruelty : therefore he was condemned, and then abused afresh by the Souldiers, and loaded with his Cross and driven out of the City to Mount *Golgotha*. Now here begins a new scene of sorrows ; the afflicted *Son of Man*, having lost much blood, and suffered so much ; having been rudely haled from the garden to *Annas*, from *Annas* to *Caiphas*, from *Caiphas* to *Pilate*, from *Pilate* to *Herod*, from *Herod* to *Pilate* again, and from thence to the place of his Execution, arrives at last, faint and weary , and sorrowful upon Mount *Calvary*, where he was to die ; here his hands and feet (which are most sensible parts of our bodies, by being most full of nerves) were pierced through and nailed to the Cross ; and though there was a seat where to rest his body, as the Ancients say, yet the Cross being lift up, and put into the hollowness of the ground to make it stand upright , his wounded body was shaken and affected, doubtless with a most acute pain. He was exposed naked, not only to the view of the multitudes, but also to the open air, which was

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extremely

28 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

extremely cold, in that the Sun was hid; he was burnt inwardly with an excessive heat and driness, being tired with so many journeys, and being exhausted of spirits and moisture, by his sorrows and bleeding, insomuch that he complained of this above all his other sufferings, crying out, *I thirst*, (though we may say, that he thirsted most for our happiness, that he thirsted to drink out the dregs of his bitter cup, that we might drink *the cup of Salvation*.) He wanted the use of his hands and feet, being tied to suffer, so that he could not so much as stir, nor wipe the blood off of his face, he was afflicted with the sight of his afflicted Mother, who from her wounded soul reflected sorrow upon her dying Son and Saviour. His soul was also, as it were crucified, by the sense of the Divine Anger against the sins of men, for the which he was making expiation, insomuch that he complained, that God had forsaken him. And lastly, his heart-strings were broke, and his body deprived of life, by a most violent and bitter death. And now, who shall not love *JESUS*? and who shall not admire that love which is exprest in the breadth of the Cross? Lord, how exceeding broad was thy Cross, which contained so many sorts of torments! Nothing can be compared to it, but thy charity, which made thee take it up, that we might be charged with nothing

thing, but a pleasant and *ease yoke*! But Lord, why do we, most vile and sinful creatures refuse to bear thy *light burthen*, when thou the Most Holy and Most Highest hast born for us so sad and intolerable a load.

C A A P. IX.

The length of the Cross.

WE are now to measure the length of the Cross, that is, the time of Christs bitter passion, the tedious duration of his sufferings, which began with his birth and continued to his last breath. The Life of *J E S U S*, as we have seen, was, as it were, a chain of miseries, every link, every connection, had something grievous and afflictive, *he was a man of sorrows*: therefore we no where read that ever he laught or injoyed the pleasures and the mirth of this world: but that he suffered much and wept several times, is recorded by the Evangelists. Every day was, in some manner the day of his Crucifixion (which to us is *Good*, but to him was sad *Friday*:) for he knowing all along what he was to suffer, and living in expectation of that cruel

C 3 death:

30 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

death : we may say that his fears did, in some manner, prevent his murderers, and by anticipation, acted upon him, while he lived, what they were to inflict on him to put him to death : for he was pleased to assume, together with our nature, our innocent passions and infirmities. *I have a Baptism (saith he) to be Baptized with, and how am I constrained until it be accomplished!* that was the Baptism of his Blood, which he wisht for, because of his love to mankind, his great desire of paying our ransoms : but feared, because of the repugnance of his humane nature, to such bitter sufferings ; wherefore (saith he) *Ἰνὸν ἔχω*, I am constrained, I am in a streight betwixt two, I wish, and yet I fear to die. But that which we most properly call his Passion, because it exceeded the rest of his sufferings, lasted eighteen hours, without intermission, nine of *Thursday* night, and nine of *Friday* ; from the time of his agony in the garden, about nine at night, while three in the afternoon of the day following ; all which time he suffered those several sorts of pains and tortures, which are already mentioned ; all that time, he drank full draughts of that bitter cup, the fear whereof made him sweat drops of blood, when he began to taste of it ; all that time he suffered what no tongue can express, but what all hearts should endeavor

to feel and to think of daily. Lord *JESU*, thou wert tormented a long time, that we might not be tormented to all Eternity; grant that we may endure any thing for thee, and from thee our God, who didst endure so much for men, and from men.

CHAP. X.

The depth of the Cross.

WE have seen that bar of the Cross, on which the hands of our Blessed Saviour were nailed, *the breadth and the length*, that is, the variety and the tediousness of the pains and sufferings, he underwent for us : Now we are to consider the biggest piece which stood upright, whereon his body rested and his feet were nailed; *the depth and the height*, that is, the pureness and the greatness of his sorrows. If we read with attention the passion of Christ in the four Gospels, we shall see our Blessed Redeemer, as it were, sunk into a deep abyss of misery, by the heavy burthen of our sins; he might well cry by his Prophet, *See whether there is any sorrow like unto my sorrow?* for the greatest of humane afflictions admit of many comforts, whereas he

32 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

was deprived of all ; as there was no pain in us but was infected with sin, there was none in him but was affected with pain ; he was all over stripes and sores, an universal wound within and without, he suffered in all his capacities, in his outward and inward senses, in all the parts and faculties of his soul and body : the very circumstances of his passion, did all concur to make it more bitter and afflictive. He was deprived of that ordinary comfort of being assisted by his friends, all the Disciples forsook him and fled ; as the Prophet had foretold of him, *I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me ; I looked and there was none to help, I wondered that there was none to uphold*, Isa. 63. He was like a mild and defenceless lamb in the midst of ravenous wolves, there were none about him, but such as thirsted for his blood. And no wonder if man forsook him, when he was in some manner forsaken even by his Father. It pleased God to give him up to the cruelties of wicked men and the sorrows of death ; and that his Divine Nature, (though personally and inseparably united to his humanity) should for a time suspend the effects of its beatifying union, and leave him, suffer as a man in soul and body, the greatest pains, without the least comforts. They that saw our crucified Saviour suffer so patiently, as not to open his mouth to complain,

complain, might have thought that he had no sense of pain : therefore he cries out so bitterly, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?* Why dost thou suffer me to be plunged into this gulf of sorrow, so that I have nothing but anguish within and without ? Why dost thou suffer me to be almost overwhelmed by so great a distress, and art so far from helping me, and from the words of my complaint ? Psal. 22. Lord, we had deserved to sink, and evermore to cry and groan in the bottomless pit : and to rescue us, thou art pleased to descend very low : and with strong crying and tears, to say, *de profundis clamavi, out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord, hear my voice, Psal. 130.* be pleased to hear us, dearest Lord, when we call upon thee, and make thy voice sink into our hearts, and there find a cheerful admission, and a constant and sincere obedience.

CHAP. XI.

The height of the Cross.

NOW we have only the height of the Cross to look on, that is, the sublimity, the greatness of the torments of
 C 5 Christs.

34 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

Christs crucifixion; that in this sense his Cross was very high, appears already by what hath been said; and yet we may consider further; that he being conceived by the Holy Ghost of a most pure Virgin, was therefore of a most healthful constitution; so that his senses being very quick and apprehensive, were sensible of pain beyond other men's: and so all the blows and wounds he received, and his being nailed and stretched three long hours on the Cross, as upon the Rack, must needs have been a most exquisite torture. Also, the vigor of his nature being neither weakned nor spent, by age or distempers, he being full of strength and in the flower of his age, was capable to taste the smart and sharpness of his pain, to the very last moment of his life: and so 'tis written by S. Luke, *that he cryed with a loud voice, when he gave up the ghost*, to shew that he was still very strong, and that his death was bitter and violent to extremity. There was likewise an invisible Cross, which afflicted his soul, and made it sorrowful even unto death; *his heart was like wax, melted in the midst of his bowels*, Psal. 22. and in the midst of so many and such intolerable pains, his murderers shook their heads, made mouths at him, scoffed at his sorrows by cruel and insulting mockeries, and by their tongues and derisions aggravated those sufferings, which

threat

their hands could hardly increase ; but that the Cross of Christ was higher in the greatness of its pains than that of any Martyr, of any man that ever suffered, is evident enough only by considering who it was, that was crucified on it : for it was more that J E S U S, being perfect God as well as man, should shed one drop of blood, than that all Men and Angels should for Millions of years bear the greatest torments. Lord, we were wonderfully made by thy power, but we are yet more wonderfully redeemed by thy mercy ! Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst thus be mindful of him ! or rather, what is man, that he is unmindful of thee !

CHAP. XII..

What an infinite love is exprest by the Cross

NOW we have seen the whole frame of the Cross, writ all over in blood, with characters of love, expressions of the greatest kindness, for a testimony that J E S U S loved us unto death. Not any sorrow or anguish in his soul, nor any gap or wound in his body, but are as many
mouths :

36 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

mouths to cry aloud in the ears of all men, Behold what manner of love, God had for his enemies, his sinful and unworthy creatures, to suffer such things, to die in such a manner, for to redeem them and make them happy! Now, let us, if we can, com-

O dilectio quam magnum est vinculum tuum quo ligari petuit Deus. Idiot.

prehend the breadth and the length, the height and the depth of the love of JESUS, that love which

bound him much harder than the cords of the Jews, and nailed him to his Cross much faster than those Irons which pierced his hands and feet: for he that could, with one word, cast his enemies to the ground, could easily have broke their bands and escaped from them, but that his love did constrain him, and make him desirous and willing, thus to die. What man would suffer one half of what Christ did, for his dearest Benefactor? And then, how immense and wonderful was that charity which he expressed in suffering the ignominy and pains of the Cross, for those that were his enemies and had highly injured him, and from whom he could expect no reward, but only to be loved again! Let us therefore remember it throughout this whole book, or rather throughout our whole life, that we have been redeemed from eternal despair and misery, and from

our vain and sinful conversation, not by any corruptible thing, as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, shed with great pain and great ignominy.

C H A P. XIII.

Of the eternal happiness merited for us by the Cross of Christ, and measured by it.

THIS Love of *J E S U S* is more already by far, than ours can answer ; Could our hearts burn perpetually with those brightest flames of love which bea-
rifie the Cherubims, could they contain all the most passionate affections of all Saints, both in heaven and earth, yet we could not love *J E S U S* so much as he deserves, for having died to save us from eternal death : and yet he did [more : he suffered death that we might have life, that we might have eternal life : Not only that we might not be intirely miserable, but also that we might be perfectly happy. Heaven is the purchase of the Blood of Christ, as well as Redemption from hell ; God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, when we were dead in trespasses and
sins,

38 The Reformed Monastery; Or,

sins, hath quickned us together with Christ, and hath raised us up, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Ephes. 2. 3. Let us meditate a while, upon that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory reserved in heaven for us, 2 Cor. 4. 17. and in it consider the same dimensions, as in the price wherewith it was bought, the Cross of our Saviour : and it will greatly press and increase our obligations to love him.

It is καὶ ὡς οὐρανὸς οὐρανὸς αἰώνιος βλῆσθαι ὁρῶν, as S. Paul calls it ; each word is a part of its dimension. First, the Breadth ; it comprehends all joys and pleasures, all things that are good and desirable, all that can yield satisfaction, and create happiness to a man : even that incomprehensible and increased goodness, which is the inexhaustible fountain of perfect Bliss and Felicity ; *in whose presence there is fulness of joy, at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* Secondly, Its height. It is above the regions of the air, in the highest heavens ; the sublimity and greatness of its glory, is exprest, by being like the Angels of God ; by shining forth as the Sun ; by a kingdom, a crown incorruptible, a crown of life, and sitting with the Son of God in his throne. Thirdly, its Depth. It is pure and unmingled, it admits of nothing afflictive : neither death nor sorrow, neither hunger nor thirst, neither pain nor anguish ;

all tears are wiped from their eyes. There is the absence of all evil, and the presence of all good ; therefore 'tis called *the joy of our Lord*, than which, nothing can express a greater : for God is intirely and perfectly happy, and so incapable of any sorrow, that the least sight of the Beatifical vision would turn hell it self into a paradise. Fourthly and lastly, its Length, its never ceasing duration ; it admits of no end or period, it is everlasting, it is eternal, it is for ever and ever ; after as many millions of years as there is drops of water in the sea, it will but begin : and after as many thousands of millions more, it will be no nearer ending, than it was at first, still eternal, and ever eternal. This is that Bliss which we had forfeited by sin, and are reintituled to by the passion of Christ ; that Bliss which if often and duly considered, would make us despise the world, long for heaven, love affectionately, and serve diligently that J E S U S who offers it to us, and died to purchase it : Wherefore S. Paul prays so earnestly for the Ephesians, that God would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, the eyes of their understanding enlightened, that they might know what is the hope of his calling : and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints, Ephes. 1, 18.

That

40 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

That we might once be possessed of this bliss, as well as delivered from hell, was the Cause why *J E S U S* descended down from heaven, became poor, took on him the form of a Servant, and humbled himself unto death, even the death of the Cross ; for the joy that *was set before him*, he despised the shame and endured the Cross, saith S. Paul, Heb. 12. 2. That joy, we may say, was not the injoyment of heavenly bliss, for himself ; 'twas his without suffering ; there was no need he should bear the Cross, for to obtain it, he had a sure title to it by nature : the joy therefore that *was set before him*, was the joy of saving us, the joy of rescuing us from the jaws of death, the gulf of eternal perdition ; the joy of paying the price of our Redemption ; the joy of making us capable of eternal joys ; the joy of purchasing the glories and felicities of heaven for us, in a word, the joy of shewing us his love, and expecting the returns of ours. This was the joy, why, he despised the shame, because his shame should raise us to glory ; this was the joy, why, he endured the Cross, because his Cross should exalt us to a happy and honourable Throne.

This meditation of the great and manifold benefits of God, and the wonderful love and charity, he hath shewed us, in *J E S U S*, we may and should prosecute much farther, in all instances, for 'tis infinite ;

The Love of J E S U S. 41

nite ; and never enough to be considered and admired. But, Reader, if that little, I have here set down, doth not affect thee, and if being affected with it, thou dost not resolve to return to God, all possible acknowledgments and demonstrations of a grateful love, then read no further : for, as what precedes is matter of mercy from Gods part, so what follows is matter of duty on thine. I shall

*Hæcce via amoris est
vera non ficta : via cer-
dialis, non verbalis : via
fructuosa, non ociosa :
vix non solum sermonis,
sed etiam operis. Idiot*

now infer that we must love God, *because he first loved us* ; and that if the love of *J E S U S* to us, hath made him bear our Cross, our love to him must make us bear his yoke : if he died for us, because he loved us, then we must live to him, to make it appear that we love him. *For this is love,* saith *S. John, that we keep his Commandments,* 1 John 5. 3. By our hearty obedience we are to declare, that we are sensible of his love, and desirous to requite it. This trial of our affections he himself doth require ; *If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my love, and ye shall be my Friends if ye do whatsoever I have commanded you.* John 15. 10.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

That the mercies of our Redemption challenge our love and hearty obedience.

NOW then we are to consider, that God giving knowledge of salvation to men, hath also thereby proclaimed their duty : Manifesting his love, he hath engaged and required theirs ; as our being called to be Christians makes a great and real change, as to the happiness of our condition : a great and real change it ought also to make, as to the holiness of our conversation. Therefore S. Paul calls the Gospel, *the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*, Rom. 2. 16. and he prays for the Ephesians, that they might know the love of Christ, that so they might be filled with all the fulness of God, Ephes. 3. 18. as to say, that the knowledge of the love of Christ is exceeding powerful and efficacious, and would replenish them with all graces and vertues ; for this cause he sets so high a value upon the excellency of this knowledge, esteeming all the world but dung in comparison of it, Phil. 3. 8. and he exhorting the Christians to be ready to every good work, puts

then

them in mind that they, who were once *disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts*, had been delivered from that unhappy condition by the appearance of the love of God *our Saviour towards man*, Tit. 3. as in other places, he exhorteth Christians, to *walk worthy of their calling; worthy of the Gospel*; thereby declaring that the manifestation of the Divine Love, in the Preaching of the Gospel, was the promulgation, as of their happiness, so of their duty: whereby they were rescued, as well from living as from perishing in their sins. 'Tis the appearance of that grace of God which bringeth salvation, Tit. 2. 11. that teacheth men to live *soberly, righteously and godly*: and 'tis the receiving and crediting that Heavenly Doctrine, that *quencheth the fiery darts of Satan, that purifies the heart, and overcomes the world*; so that the bare belief of the truth of the New Testament is a strong and indispensable obligation to a cheerful, universal, and persevering obedience to all its precepts; the very profession of being Christians doth strictly bind us to the performance of all Christian duties. But the necessity of a Holy faith and a holy life hath been so fully evinced and asserted, and *all things that pertain to life and godliness* so cleerly and learnedly explained by Catholick Writers Ancient and Modern, especially many pious Fathers and Sons of this Church, since the Reformation,

44 *The Reformed Monastery, Or,*
ation, that I need, nor can add nothing to
their learned labours. We want charity,
not knowledge. Therefore now I turn my
self, as my design is, to draw inferences
from known and granted premises ; to
move the affections, and affect the heart;
and by various arts and meditations to kin-
dle and nourish in our breasts the fire of
a divine Love.

CHAP. XV.

*An invitation to enter the Cloister of
Love.*

I Ask therefore ; hast thou conceived a
fair Idea of Christianity ? hast thou ob-
served the glory and greatness of its Myste-
ries, the holiness of it's Doctrine, and the
perfection of its precepts and counsels ?
hast thou considered and admired the great
exemplar of all vertues, the Holy *JESUS*,
author of this Holy Institution ? hast thou
read his life with an observing eye, and
hast thou viewed the fair copies of this per-
fect Original, which have been drawn by
many of his Saints, in the imitation of his
example ? hast thou weighed the excellen-
cy of his promises, the great immunities,
and

and the invaluable advantages which belong to his followers? hast thou seriously pondered the great obligations which the love of JESUS hath laid upon thee? and art thou desirous to be happy by loving again, and being grateful? if so, enter this Cloister of love. Love JESUS, and thou shalt reign with him.

The Cloister I mean is not the precinct of a particular Abbey, or the confinement of a narrow Cell, but as to the place, it is the Catholick Church, whose inclosure is large enough to entertain all the Religions in the world, all that are of the Christian Order: And the Rule I would have thee follow, is not that of any Founders, nor even that of *Pachomius*, said to have been brought down by Angels: but that which the Son of God himself delivered, the Gospel-rule, the Christian Laws, which were bound upon us, by him that is our Lord and our Judge, and to whom gratitude, duty and interest obligeth us all to be obedient. Hath not God given his beloved Son, the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession? Psal. 2.

“Why then (saith Erasmus) Should we confine the excellency and perfection of Christi-

Cur sic arctamus Christi professionem quam ille latissime voluit patere & ego certe sic optarim Evangelicam Religionem sic omnibus esse cordi, &c. Enc.

anity

46 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

" anity to particular places ; Why should
 " we make that short and narrow , which
 " Christ would have to be of an universal
 " extent ? If it be words we affect, is not
 " a City a great Monastery , the Abbot
 " whereof is the Bishop, set over it by
 " Christ ? Would to God the Christian Rule
 " were so well beloved and observed that
 " no man might seek or desire the *Benedi-*
 " *ctin* or *Franciscan*. I say so too, all this
 is true and to be wished : yet the universal
 comprehends many particular Churches,
 and the Christian Rule hath also many se-
 veral interpretations : therefore to be plain
 and positive ; the Church of *England* (as
 the purest part, or member of the Catho-
 lick ; which hath repurged corrupt inno-
 vations, maintaining still a due conformity
 with Antiquity) is that which I recom-
 mend to thee above all others : and for the
 best interpretation of the Sacred Canon,
 the Doctrine and Worship of this Church
 is that, which I would have thee prefer to
 all the rest.

CHAP. XVI.

*The Vow to be taken at the entrance of
Loves Monastery.*

BUt (because I speak not to dissen-
ters, nor intend to dispute with
them) thou wilt say, that thou hast en-
tered this Cloister already, and hast under-
taken its Rule ; and so far 'tis well. But
there is this difference betwixt what thou
hast already done in this matter, and what
now I wish thee to do : that thou didst not
come of thy self, but wert brought into this
society ; that it was by proxy thou promi-
sedst to observe the orders of it ; and that
what was done at that time is never to be
repeated. Whereas now, by an after ele-
ction, by free and considerate acts of thine
own will, I would have thee often renew
thy holy vows and protestations, and to do
it with a great sense of love, and gratitude.
Ratifie then thy former engagements by
being confirmed, if thou art not, and if
thou art, by a hearty and sincere endeavour
to perform thy vows and promises, which
are as follows. First, *To renounce the Devil
and all his works, the pomps and vanities of
this*

48 The Reformed Monastery; Or,

this wicked world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful lusts of the flesh. Secondly, To believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. And Thirdly, To keep Gods Holy will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life.

This vow contains all thy duty, the highest pitch of Christian perfection, rules for the most Regular and Spiritual Life; let thy serious application, and earnest endeavour to observe it,

Quod summum est id omnibus est emendandum ut saltem mediocria assequamur, nec est quod ullum vite genus ab hoc scopo submoveamus, &c. Eras.

discriminate and sever thee from the profane and less religious world: Thou needest no distinct inclosure, no distinct habits, no distinct patrons or offices, thy sincere Study, thy Religious care to discharge

In Vestimentis non est contritio mentis;

Ni mens sit pura, nihil confert regula dura.

this obligation, will sufficiently cloister thee in, from the looser society and conversation of men,

and will make a difference great enough betwixt thee and them.

But though thou dost remain in the civil society of the world, and the neighbourhood of thy neighbour: yet various are the ways that lead through the world to heaven, and here I undertake to teach thee a sure and short one, through which all glorified Saints

have

have past. Some persons here are eminent in one vertue, some in another :

In Cato videbimus & amabimus, hic amandum ut videamus.

some are guided by hope, and some by fear : Many different are the considerations and helps whereby men are brought to make themselves happy in doing their duty : but the motive, the guide, the way, the instrument I recommend thee above all others, is Love.

Dilectio est via rectissima absque devio : via brevis absque tardio : via plana absque tumultu : via clara absque nubilo : via secunda absque periculo, &c. Idiot. Cont.

Love is the strongest motive, the surest guide, the safest way, the best instrument in the world : to live well, to keep thee from wandring, to bring thee to heaven, to conquer all oppositions, and do the work of God thoroughly. Love is by far the best Monastery ; it will both secure thee from the world, and yet enable thee to do much good in it. Love hath a general intendance over all vertues and duties, and makes them pleasant to us, and acceptable to God. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law.* Love, and thou canst never do amiss ; love, and thou canst never miscarry.

48 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

this wicked world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful lusts of the flesh. Secondly, To believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. And Thirdly, To keep Gods Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life.

This vow contains all thy duty, the highest pitch of Christian perfection, rules for the most Regular and Spiritual Life; let thy serious application, and earnest endeavour to observe it,

Quod summum est id omnibus est eritendum ut saltem mediocria assequamur, nec est quod ullum vite genus ab hoc scopo submoveamus, &c. Eras.

discriminate and sever thee from the profane and less religious world: Thou needest no distinct inclosure, no distinct habits, no distinct patrons or offices, thy sincere Study, thy Religious care to discharge

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But though thou dost remain in the civil society of the world, and the neighbourhood of thy neighbour: yet various are the ways that lead through the world to heaven, and here I undertake to teach thee a sure and short one, through which all glorified Saints

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Love hath a general intendance over all vertues and duties, and makes them pleasant to us, and acceptable to God. Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Love, and thou canst never do amiss ; love, and thou canst never miscarry.

In Cæto videbimus & amabimus, hic amandum ut videamus.

Dilectio est via rectissima absque devio : via brevis absque radio : via plana absque tumulo : via clara absque nubilo : via secuta absque periculo, &c. Idiot. Cont.

CHAP. XVII.

Considerations of the nature of Love, and first of Self Love.

Love is the common Prince and parent of other passions, as they all take their Laws, so they take their Origine from it: Or, to speak more properly, love it self is all passions, and it obtains several different names, according to its several acts and objects. Love “ (saith “ *S. Aug.*) is called “ desire, when it “ gasps after its beloved object; when “ ’tis possess’d of it, it “ takes another denomination, and is “ called joy or pleasure, when it flies “ from what it abhors, it hath the name of “ fear; and ’tis called sorrow, when what it feared overtakes it: But still love is the only passion: desire, anger, joy and sorrow, hope and fear are either the motions or acts, or else the accidents of it. This clearly shews the great power and activity of this noble passion:

Amor inhians habet quod amatur, cupiditas est, idem habens eoque fruens, latitia est, superans quod ei adversatur, timor est, idque cum acciderit sentiens, tristitia est. Aug. de Civ. Dei l. 14. c. 7.

sion: for 'tis well known that the greatest, and indeed all humane actions that are free, proceed from these natural affections, and so are the effects of love. There is no need, to distinguish the several sorts thereof, declaring that love is, either natural or supernatural, sensual or spiritual, of friendship or of interest; for all these are the same faculty, or passion in man, differing in their principles or objects only: neither would it much avail to give and explain accurate and studied definitions of love, which is much better felt than express'd, and much better declared by actions than words: it will be more useful to consider, that, as love is the principle of all passions, so it is of all virtues and vices. This fountain sendeth forth the clearest and the foulest streams; and like all other things, the greater its excellency, the worse is its abuse: so that it should be our greatest care, to use it well, and set it upon the right object.

No joy in enjoyment without love, without it no pleasure in fruition: it is the great instrument of happiness, if we place it aright, and it brings the greatest infelicities if we misplace it. 'Tis a misguided love that makes men vicious, that causeth all the disorders in the world: because men love themselves more than God; and

52 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

so would be Gods to themselves, the Authors of their own happiness, expecting their greatest felicities, either from their bodies as the sensual *Epicures*, or from their minds, as the proud *Stoicks*. Hence it is, that in the head of a long catalogue of the blackest sins, *S. Paul* sets self-love as the cause, and origine of all the rest : saying, that in the worst and most perilous times, Men should be lovers of their own selves, 2 Tim. 3. 2, 4. and again, that they should be lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God ; which, being the greatest depravation of the understanding and of the will of men, plungeth them into the greatest sins, and thence into the greatest miseries. Certain it is that piety or true goodness consisteth in willingly submitting one self to the Divine Pleasure, either to suffer or obey : and certain it is that self-love will admit of neither, it makes a man incapable of Religion, the Essence whereof is to deny our own, to comply with God's Will : and so instead of that *Godliness, Justice and Sobriety*, which are the three Generals comprehensive of all religious duties, this muddy head-spring *self-love* sends forth three muddy streams, which cause the overflowing of ungodliness, and almost drown the world under a deluge of wickedness. These be the love of sensual pleasures, called Voluptuousness ; the love of riches, called Covetousness, and the

vain-

vain-glorious love of honour, called Pride
or Ambition. These three are disclaimed
and renounced by all Christians in the first
part of their Baptifinal vow : for the love
of them confounds the world and all Reli-
gion ; makes men criminal in souls, bodies,
and estates, and is the great enemy to
their rest and falvation. Therefore S. John
who calls these *the lust of the flesh, the lust of
the eyes, and the pride of life*, gives us this
necessary caution ; *love not the world, nei-
ther the things that are in the world ; if any
man love the world, the love of the father is not
in him*, 1 John 2. 15. that is, as our Blessed
Saviour saith, *no man can serve two masters,*
for either he will hate the one, and love the
*other ; or else he will hold to the one and de-
spise the other : ye cannot serve God and Mam-*
mon, Mat. 6. 24. There is no halting be-
twixt God and Baal, the one or the other
must be acknowledged for Lord ; there
cannot be two contrary Sovereigns toge-
ther ; and the same thing cannot be granted
to two several competitors ; if we love the
world it reigns in our hearts and God is ex-
cluded : if we give
our love to the world,
we cannot possibly
give it to God also ;
so then the love of
our selves is Concupi-
scence, the mother of

*Amor motus est cordis
qui cum se inordinate
mouet, cupiditas dicitur :
cum vero ordinatus est
charitas appellatur. Aug.
de subst. dil. c. 2.*

54 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

all sin and impurity, and the love of God is Grace or charity, the fountain of all holiness and vertue: and these two, according as they are predominant in men, make here the distinction betwixt the penitent and the impenitent, betwixt the just and the unjust: and will make the great difference hereafter, betwixt those that shall dwell in the embraces of the God of Love to eternity, and those that shall dwell with everlasting burning; for every man is what

Talis est quisque, qualis est dilectio ejus, terram diligis, terra es, &c.
Aug. Tract. 2. in 1 Joh.

he loves, (as S. Augustine saith) the irresistible power of that mighty passion doth in some manner

transform him into that which his love embraceth: and therefore to know whether a man be good or bad, we inquire not what he knows or what he believes, but what he doth love; being sure that his morals are of the same nature as his love; because his desires and actions are all guided by it.

CHAP. XVIII.

*That the Love of JESUS requires
we should mortifie Self-love.*

THis makes it our greatest duty, as it is our greatest interest, to rule by Reason and Religion that passion which certainly will rule over us, to set our love upon the right object, upon God, not upon our selves. Not that we should, or can be our own enemies, and seek our own ruine; *no man ever yet hated his own flesh*, saith S. Paul, Ephes. 29. the worst enemies to mankind are kind to themselves: and we may as soon lose our being, as the desire of our well being.

But we must understand that our supreme happiness consisteth in the enjoyment of God, who is that infinite increased Goodness, that can alone fully beatifie us. God is infinitely happy and hath the possession of his infinite perfections by loving himself, and we also become happy by loving him with all our hearts and souls, it was so in the state of innocency, and so it is still and ever shall be, and Angels and men became miserable only by departing from the love of God, which was then as 'tis now

56 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

to be exprest by obedience : So that when man prefers any thing to God, he not only departs from his duty, but also from his sovereign bliss.

In the time of mans integrity, God was to be regarded and loved first and most of all, so it must be still : the difference is, that then man did it naturally, and now by a supernatural assistance : he did it then by the grace of his Original Righteousness, and now by the grace of the Gospel ; he did it then without reluctancy, now he hath sinful appetites and passions which he must deny and mortifie, before he can do it. Therefore our blessed Saviour requires it, at the very entrance of his School, as a necessary qualification to all that will be his Disciples, that they should deny themselves and hate all things in comparison of him : *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me : and again, if any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple, Luk. 9. 23. 24. 26.* that is, he that will own *JESUS*, and be owned by him, must in all things give him the preeminence ; must relinquish his natural desires, deny his own will, that he may yield an humble obedience to God ; he must forsake all things that come in competition with him ; and

even

even part with his dearest relations and his own life, (as though he hated them) rather than commit what God hath forbidden, or disclaim what he would have us profess ; this self-abnegation, this daily self-crucifixion is no act of self-hatred, as

*Ille satis se diligit qui
sedulo agit ut summo fru-
atur bono.*

the world might think : but the greatest kindness we can shew to our selves or others : for 'tis the onely way whereby to make our lives comfortable here, and eternally happy in the world to come : and in many cases more hard and less advantageous we practise self-denial, of our free choice. As he therefore that cuts off one of his limbs, hates not himself, but seeks the preservation of his body ; and he that casts his goods over-board, hates them not, but prefers his safety to them : so in this case, he that parts with his earthly enjoyments, hates them not, but prefers heaven to this earth ; he that loseth this present life, hates it not, but loves eternal life beyond it ; and he that forsakes his friends or parents to follow his Saviour in the discharge of a good conscience, hates them not, but seeks to win them to their happiness, by preferring his God and his Salvation to their unjust desires. In this case the promise is verified, that he that parts with any thing for Christs sake, receives an

58 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
 hundred fold in compensation : and he
 that loseth his life, certainly finds it; there-
 fore hating our kindred and our own lives,
 is otherwise exprest in *S. Matthew*; *he that*
loveth father or mother more than me is not
worthy of me, &c. Mat. 10. 37. As much
 as to say, that it is only required, that the
 love of God should be predominant; that
JESUS should be dearer to us, than all
 persons whatever; and that in the first
 place, we should love God, with all our
 minds, with all our strength, and with all
 our souls: for then afterwards, the love
 of our-selves, and
 others being subordi-
 nate would become
 regular and innocent.

*Relle novit vivere,
 qui relle novit amare.*
Aug.

CHAP. XIX.

*How great a Vertue is Divine Charity;
 or the Love of God.*

NOW as all sins and miseries proceed
 from a misplaced love; so all vertues
 and felicities are the product of love well
 guided, and placed on the right object;
 this is as beneficial and advantageous, as
 the

the other is pernicious : that is, (as *S. Augustine* saith) that as self-love is the root of all evil, so the love of God is the root of all good, the stock whence all vertues do grow. The excellency of Divine Love is so great, so transcendent, that it alone is accepted on its own account, and all other things for its sake ; a faith strong enough to work miracles, alms the most expensive, and even the flames of Martyrdom profit nothing without love, as *S. Paul* teacheth ; love it is that makes all good works meritorious in the best sense ; love it is that gives a value to all other vertues ; or rather, it is love that produceth all good works and vertues, as they are so indeed. Love is the discharge of our whole duty, *the fulfilling of the law*, saith *S. Paul*, *Rom. 13. 10.* love is that grace which renews and sanctifies our natures and abides for ever ; it is the greatest, the most excellent gift of God ; it is even the Divine Spirit, who unites all things within the bonds of love and unity, saith *S. Aug.* and

Sicut radix omnium malorum est cupiditas : ita radix omnium bonorum est charitas. Serm. de Charit.

Sine charitate fides potest esse, sed non prodesse. Aug. 1 Cor. 13.

Unitas Spiritus continet omnia. Serm. Pent. Donum est Spiritus Sanctus in quo nobis omnia bona dantur.

with :

60 *The Reformed Monastery, Or,*

with whom all good things are ever given. Divines teach that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, by way of love ; wherefore he is called, *nexus amoris quo conjungitur Pater cum Filio, & Filius cum Patre* ; that is, in the Language of the Church, that in the

Charitas qua Pater diligit Filium & Filius Patrem, quæ est Spiritus Sanctus, ineffabilem communionem amborum demonstrat. De Trin. l. 15.

Unity of the same Spirit, the Father and the Son live and reign evermore ; or, as S. Augustine expresseth it, The love

wherewith the Father and the Son love mutually is the Holy Spirit, and represents best the Myſtery of their Incomprehenſible Union.

Now that Divine Spirit, which is the eternal love of God to himself, is given to us, in the grace of love or charity (which are one and the same) whereby we are all joined together into one body, and all united to God ; therefore in our holding Communion with the Church, we are commanded to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, Ephes. 4. 3. and we are taught, that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given to us, Rom, 5. 5. and that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost are all one, 2 Cor. 13. 14. so that to come to the highest pitch,

pitch, and finish the *elogium* of love, we we may say with S. John, that *God is love*, and then we have said all. *God is love*, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him, 1 Joh. 4. 16. that is, God is an abyfs of love and goodness; by love he gives himself to us, and by love we give up our selves to him, and are transformed into him. Wonder not therefore, if the effects of love are so glorious and wonderful, when it proceeds immediately from God, and is the communication of himself to us; when it is the grace of Jesus Christ, and the most precious gift of the Divine Spirit; when it is the Sanctification of our natures, and the bettering and perfecting of the noblest of humane affections, natural love, that powerful passion whereby all things and all men are governed.

Deus charitas est; brevis laus sed magna laus: brevis in sermone & magna in intellectu, &c.
Aug. Tract. 9. in Ep. Johan.

CHAP. XX.

*That love always pursues what it thinks
good : and is never satisfied till it hath
obtained it.*

THOUGH the properties of love in gene-
ral be better known by experience
than they can be by
discourse : yet it may
serve to good purpose
to say something of
them; the first where-

*Ineffabilem prorsus ego
sentio amorem Dei; &
qui sentiri magis quam
dici possit. Basil.*

of is, that love always embraceth what is
good, either in truth or appearance: for
Mans inclinations are still the same, as they
were in the state of innocence; though
much depraved: we still pursue after what
we think will make us happy; only we
mistake. Like the bramble in the fable,
which having lost a rich freight of the finest
silks, and now takes hold of the coarsest
stuffs to recover its loss; so have all men
a secret sense, that they are fallen from a
state of felicity, and have lost a jewel of in-
finite value, which still they esteem and
love, though they know it not: and there-
fore now, to recover the eminency of their

first.

first station, they are climbing upon every molehil, petty mountains of ambition; to recover their lost jewel, they pick up every pebble stone; where they see a glimpse of beauty, where they relish any thing of goodness, there they set their love and affection, as if that were the *summum bonum*; which is but an imperfect shadow of it; so that we are like an infortunate lover, who, being seized by a phrensy, forgets and forsakes his Mistress, and dotes on her picture. We neglect God, and fall in love with those things that have the least impress of his perfection: and then, like Idolaters, we pay that worship to the work, which is due to the maker only.

Therefore ought we to take great heed, that we be not taken with every seeming beauty or goodness: but that we examine whether that be the thing which will make us intirely happy, and beyond which we shall wish for nothing. For if it be not, we must pass it by, and seek further, and never rest, nor set our hearts on any thing, till we have found that true and perfect good, most obvious and easie to be found, which being loved will be certainly possesst, and being possesst, will make us perfectly happy; and that is God alone. It is the meditation of *S. Augustine*, "Thou maist seek after honours and not obtain them; thou maist labour for riches, and remain poore; thou

64 The Reformed Monastery; Or,

*Amatus & honorem
& fame non perventu-
rus : ---quis me amavit
& non ad me pervenit ?
--- quisquis me querit
cuni : solum, &c. Tract.
10. in Ep. Johan.*

“ thou maist dote on
“ pleasures, and have
“ many sorrows : but
“ our God, the Su-
“ preme Goodness
“ saith, Who, ever
“ sought me, and
“ found me not? who

“ ever desired me and obtained me not?
“ who ever loved me, and mist of me? I
“ am with him that seeks for me ; he hath
“ me already that wisheth for me ; and he
“ that loveth me is sure of me : the way
“ to come to me is neither long nor diffi-
“ cult ; love makes me present to every
“ lover.

A second property of love is ; that it ne-
ver rests and is never satisfied, until it be
possest of the beloved object ; This makes
abused worldlings so busie , so perpetually
restless and active about the purchase of
their beloved vanities : and this makes
devout Christians, like S. Paul, Phil. 3. ne-
ver to count themselves to have apprehend-
ed : but forgetting the things which are
behind, and reaching forth to those that are
before, to press forward towards the mark,
the price of their high calling, the object
of their love and most passionate desires.
This restlessness and activity of love found
work enough for the Fathers of the De-
sarts ; whose indefatigable pains to mortifie
their

The Love of J E S U S. 65

their sinful appetites ; whose unwearied diligence to serve God ; whose swift and violent motion heaven-ward is the object of our wonder, and upbraids our sloth and negligence. They were almost wholly freed from the necessities of the body, which is the endless task and work of other men, and yet they were always employed ; they had almost nothing to do, and yet were never idle ; the love of Eternity, the love of *J E S U S* kept them in action ; they dwelt in peace, and yet were never at rest. Our heart, which is the seat of love, can never be quiet, till it returns within Gods embraces, till it be possess'd of that infinite good, which all men love, though but a few know it. See the several plots and undertakings of men in the world, 'tis love sets them at work : 'tis to obtain what their blind affections run after, that they are so assiduous and so laborious. See the prayers and pious exercises, the self-denials and mortifications, the manifold acts of charity and the great patience of Christians in the Church : 'tis love also hath set them their task and makes them so diligent, so watchful till they have fulfilled it. We sometimes wipe the tears from our eyes, and our sorrows admit of joyful intervals ; our anger doth not last always, and sometimes hatred is asleep : but love like the heart wherein it dwells, can never cease to

66 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

*Habet omnis amor vim
suam, nec potest vacare
amor in anima amanti.*
Aug.

to act and move till
it ceaseth to be; when
ever love is, it shew
its life and power,
and is always doing

CHAP. XXI.

*That Love is strong and effective, and
sweetens all labours.*

IN the third place, as love is active, so
it is effective ; it doth not spend it self
in useless and insignificant attempts ; its
strength is great, as well as its endeavour.
Great are the dangers and difficulties
which love overcomes ; it carries the am-
bitious lover of honour through many un-
easy perils to a fading laurel ; it carries
the covetous lover of riches through the
most hard and slavish labours, to his false
and treacherous Mammon ; and it carries
likewise the devout lover of *JESUS*
through obedience and self humiliation,
through briars and uneasy crosses, through
patience and the greatest sufferings to the
enjoyment of his Beloved. Love can do
all things, since it brought God down from
heaven to become man, and die for man.

who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? saith S. Paul, Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us ; for I am perswaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, Rom. 8. 35. &c. As much as to say, that the power of love is irresistible, that it answers all objections and conquers all obstacles : notwithstanding mans high provocations and great unworthiness, love made the Almighty lay down the arms of his just vengeance, and open his bosom of mercy, to give his dear and only Son to man for a Saviour ; God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life, John 3. 16. And likewise man is enabled or rather forced by love to do and suffer any thing ; as soon as Divine Love enters a mans heart, of proud, it makes him humble ; of lustful and intemperate, it makes him chaste and sober ; of covetous, it makes him charitable ; of dainty and effeminate, it fits him to be a Martyr. No ill habits so deeply rooted, but love can pluck them up ; no cross so heavy but love can bear it. Many waters
cannot

68 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

cannot quench love (saith Solomon) neither can the floods drown it, Cant 8. 7. No, the strongest torrent of affliction is but like drops of water sprinkled upon the fire, it increaseth the flames and the ardency thereof. *Love is as strong as death,* verse 6.

Magnum verbum fortis ut mors dilectio; magnificentius exprimi non potuit fortitudo charitatis, quis enim morti resistat? ignibus, undis, ferre, regibus resistitur, venit una mors, quis ei resistit? nihil illa fortius, propterea viribus ejus charitas comparatur, Aug. in Psal. 121.

and death is very strong, stronger than all visible creatures. We daily fight against death and bear it back; by rest and food and Physick, we dispute the victory with it many years; but it is ever victorious at last; so is love, it never gives over, till

it hath conquered all oppositions; its courage increaseth together with its difficulties; the more obstacles in its way, the greater its endeavours, the more fierce its contentions. Death severs a man from himself, and disunites what seems inseparable: love also takes the lovers soul from him, and unites it to the beloved, so that he lives more in what he loves than in himself; *love is as strong as death*; Death converts the greatest sinners, or at least keeps them from sinning at all, any longer: so doth love, it certainly mortifies all, even the most reigning sins, it will not suffer them

to sin that love God. We can tame wild beasts by industry ; overcome the barrenness of the earth by labour ; resist the angry elements by Art and Physick ; no evil but hath a remedy, only death hath none, there is no striving against it : so that nothing can better express the irresistible power of love, than to say that it is *as strong as death*.

The last property of love I shall now mention, is, that love sweetens bitter things, makes our labours pleasant, and even our sufferings delightful. How heavy is that yoke which is imposed by an ungrateful hand? The Souldier prest to the service can hardly bear his arms : but he that is inrolled by love thinks them light and bears them with pleasure ; the slave that works in the Mines counts his very life a burthen : the niggard that works much harder likes well his drudgery, because the love of riches is his task-master ; he that serves his master out of fear works faintly and with a heavy heart : he that serves him out of love, doth it diligently and yet with cheerfulness ; the Christian pilgrim who is driven heaven-ward with fears and terrors, goeth on with much reluctancy, and a sorrowful heart : he that is *drawn with the cords of love*, follows with joyfulness, minds not the ruggedness of his way, and even rejoyceth

70 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
in his weariness, because it brings him
nearer and nearer to his beloved: he that
that could say, *the love of Christ constraineth*
us, could say also, *we rejoyce in tribulati-*

Nulla modo sunt onerose labores amantium, sed etiam ipsi delectantur, sicut venantium, piscantium: interest ergo quid ametur: nam in eo quod amatur, aut non laboratur, aut labor amatur.
Aug.

ons. 'Twas the love
of *JESUS* made
primitive Christians
work hard and suffer
much, with comfort
and unspeakable joy:
and 'tis for want of
that sweet and Divine
Love that Christians
now find sorrow and
great difficulty in that little they do or suffer for *JESUS*. The labours of love are ever pleasant; nothing is hard that love binds upon us.

CHAP. XXII.

A farewell to all sinful desires.

THis great power of love is now to be drawn into act, and these considerations to be reduced into practice.

Now therefore enter more seriously than ever this Cloister of love; ingage thy self further into the society of the true lovers
of

of *J E S U S* ; enter now actually and affectionately upon *the work and labour of love.*

Remember now thy Baptismal Vows, remember them I say, now that *the love of Christ constrains*, binds thee to fulfil them.

Things are best preserved by that which first gave them being. And now thy making good that stipulation, thy part of that gracious Covenant whereby thou art related to Christ ; that (according to the design of that Sign of the Cross, which was drawn upon thee as the badge of thy profession) thou *wouldest not be ashamed to profess the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world and the devil, and to continue his faithful Souldier and Servant unto thy lives end* : So now thou shouldest accomplish this promise by *faith working by love.*

Now then retire a while and enter thy Closet ; sequester thy thoughts from the world ; and confer with thy Soul about thy duty and thy great interest. Call to mind the obligations the love of *J E S U S* hath laid upon thee, and how thou hast promised to requite it, by renouncing all things that are contrary to thy love and duty to him. By *renouncing the devil and all his works ; the vain pomps and vanities of the world, and the covetous desires of the same ; as also the sinful lusts of thy flesh.* Now thou art to *ap-*
prove

prove thy self a true lover and servant of *J E S U S*, by departing from these by repentance and amendment. Leave them therefore and forsake them, these enemies of thy Saviour, of thy love, and of thy happiness. Let thy Soul full of the love of *J E S U S*, thus meditate, and resolve, and express thy devout affections to him that died for thee.

The love of *J E S U S* hath prevailed; I find my heart wounded; I can no longer resist the charms of his love; he hath wooed me so long, and with so much kindness, that now my heart is his; I will *love him, because he first loved me*. Now it repenteth me that ever I rejected his suite, that ever I was unkind to him; it grieveth me that ever I countenanced and preferred his rivals, the lusts of sensuality, covetousness, and pride, which I renounced in my Baptism; I will now exclude them wholly; this is the first mark *J E S U S* shall receive of my sincere affection to him, that I will entertain nor care for no longer those his enemies, with whom I have had an unhappy intelligence for too long a time; henceforth, if they come near me, I will endeavour to drive them away; if they come after me, I will flee; if they persevere in their attempts, they shall get nothing else, but shame and denials. Away from me then, ye wicked spirits, with all
your

your tempting allurements, worldly vanities, deceitful riches, sensual pleasures; I remember that I renounced you all, when first I gave up my name to *JESUS*, when he first began to shew and seal his love to me, and to ingage mine I then renounced *the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh*; I now remember those my ingagements, and grieve that I have not kept them: and therefore will hate you the more; that you made me forget my promises, and break my holy vows. Now will I be revenged of you, ye proud and ambitious designs, lustful thoughts, greedy desires of wealth; I will now kill and crucifie you. Henceforth, it shall be my honour, that I am a Servant of *JESUS*;—it shall be my delight and pleasure, that I am a lover of *JESUS*; and it shall be my wealth, that he is mine as I am his. *JESUS* hath done and suffered much to declare his love and to deserve mine; he hath come down from heaven, and humbled himself to my mean and low condition; he hath lived poor and despised; he hath been afflicted and persecuted; he hath died for me; hereby I know that he loves me, because he laid down his life for me, but ye his unworthy rivals never gave me any assurance of your affection, never did, or suffered

E

any

74 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

any thing for me. *J E S U S* exposed himself to shame, that I might become glorious; endured pains that I might have pleasure; he became poor, that I might be enriched: but covetousness offers me riches, to pierce me through with many sorrows; lust enticeth me, to wound me, when I have consented to it; and pride promiseth me honours, to cumber me and expose me to envy. *J E S U S* is infinitely lovely, he is all perfection and goodness; and he desires to be loved, not for any advantage of his own, but to make his lovers intirely and eternally happy: but you painted idols of abused mortals, are in your selves ugly, and even loathsome; though at a great distance, ye may seem somewhat fair, yet near at hand, ye are nothing but deformity; ye always prove vain and vexarious; ye seek to enter mens hearts, only to tyrannize and torment them, and betray them to eternal sorrows. *J E S U S* is a true and constant lover, he ever owns his friends: he never fails them that love him; he helps them in their distresses; he comforts them in their sorrows; and when they die he stands by them: but ye temporal deceitful pleasures, are false and inconstant; ye forsake your friends in their greatest need; ye flatter them for a few Summer days, while the Sun shines kindly upon them; but in the
rigors

rigors of Winter, when an unprosperous storm ariseth, you are gone, you leave them to die comfortless; they carry nothing of you, when they go from hence, but the bitter remembrance of your treacherousness. *J E S U S* is a most grateful lover, he ever returns love for love; he is ever found of them that seek him; to them that desire him he ever gives himself; every true lover of *J E S U S* is sure to enjoy him: but you worldly enjoyments are generally most unkind to your most passionate lovers; ye flee from them that run after you; ye grieve and vex your greatest admirers, ye are ever uncertain, false and ungrateful. I will therefore never love you again; nay, I resolve to hate and persecute you; to mortifie and watch against my lusts, my pride, and covetous desires. But *J E S U S* shall reign in my heart; him will I love; him will I serve; him will I endeavour to please in all things; I will be wholly his; therefore I renounce all friendship with you that are his enemies; there can be no agreement betwixt the Holy *J E S U S* and this sinful world; If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him, 1 John 2. 15. Lord, we beseech thee grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee, the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHAP. XXIII.

*That the Love of J E S U S and the
love of Sin can never consist together.*

Further, consider O my Soul, that J E S U S my Blessed Master is the Prince of purity, he will never abide in the same heart with intemperance and with fleshly lusts. He is meek and lowly, pride cannot follow him. By works of mercy and charity he calls us to the possession of heavenly treasures, therefore greedy worldly mindedness can never entertain nor prefer his promise. Lust, Pride, Covetousness can never abide with the love of Christ, they can never be reconciled, J E S U S and they are mortal enemies. Mortal I may call them, because they were his murderers, or rather because, he died to put them to death; *we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold from our vain conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ: J E S U S shed his blood to redeem us, as well from the practice and commission, as from the punishment and destruction of sin. Or rather of both together, for they are not to be put asunder;*

Mort

The Love of J E S U S. 77

Moral and natural evil ever go hand in hand, as happiness is inseparable from Goodness and virtue. *Blessed are the the pure in heart, for without holiness no man shall see God.*

S. Paul therefore saying that *Christ died unto sin*, that is, to take away sin, infers from thence, that *we being baptized into Christs death, our old man is now crucified, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin*, Rom. 6. and S. Peter likewise makes it the purpose, why *Christ did bear our sins* (their punishment) *on his own body, on the tree, that we thereby being dead unto sin might live unto righteousness*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from this present evil world, Gal. 1. 4. The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the Devil, 1 John 3. 8. Sin is that which God hates above all things : sin is that which is most contrary to his nature, and to our happiness ; and so J E S U S was crucified, that sin might be destroyed, he died that sin might live no longer : and therefore I renounced all sin, the Devil and all his works, when J E S U S owned me for his friend, and I owned him for my Lord and Master, they are incompatible, their inconsistency is irreconcilable ; If I hold to the one, I must despise the other ; If I love one, I must hate the other. I will there-

78 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*
fore, as I am most bound, and as I have
promised, forsake sin and follow *JESUS*;
I will fight against his enemies, and side
with him against my own corrupt affecti-
ons ; while I have a being, I will love and
obey *JESUS*.

! CHAP. XXIV.

*Of outward helps and instruments of
love and obedience.*

NOW to effect these good resolutions,
we must use means to bring our
hearts to a devout and Religious Temper,
and so to keep them. It will not suffice
that we intend well except we perform.
We may soon be diverted from our best
designs, either by temptations, or by the
interruption of worldly business. There-
fore the revolutions of time which bring
on us the snares and disturbances of this
life, must also bring with them the frequent
returns of our pious exercises and Chri-
stian duties.

We must often recollect our thoughts and
listen to the Divine Love of our Blessed *JESUS*. We must entertain our Souls with him;
renew our religious purposes ; and call to
mind

mind those special considerations which use to affect us most of all. We must often resort to those fountains of Grace which God hath opened to his Church in his publick Worship, and the several dispensations of his Word and Sacraments by his Ministers. To these we must be sure to add Fastings, Alms and Prayers, than which we can do nothing more acceptable to God; nothing that can better declare how much we love him, and how heartily we devote to him our bodies, souls and estates. All these are not only means, but duties of Religion also, not to be omitted, upon any pretence whatever.

But now the following have more of indifferency, less of necessity in them: but yet may have a good influence upon the inner man; may move our affections and declare or increase our devotion and our sincerity. Such are the constant reading of good Books; set times of meditation and mental prayer; the enjoyning to ourselves a strict silence for some convenient time, to bridle our tongue and so to use it to discipline: and as it were to unsay and retract inwardly by hearty repentance what we have said amiss.

Sometimes like *Hezekiah* to turn our selves to the wall to mourn in secret; I mean, to retire from the world, and enter our closet, there to confer with God and

80 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
our own souls, about Eternity and the way
to a blessed one.

Every day, or at least once a week to
cast our eyes back, and take an account of
our lives, especially of what we have done
since our last examen: that we may repent
and rectifie our follies, renew our good
resolutions, and increase our diligence and
our care.

In our adorations and penitential pray-
ers, to cast our selves on the ground with
the humblest prostration; to hold our
hands like criminals bound, supplicating
before their judge; to look up to heaven;
to smite our breasts, and so excite our
zeal and contrition.

Some are much affected with watching;
with visible representations; the sight of a
dying man, and such instructions and me-
mentoes as enter th: Soul by the eyes,
which being the quickest and most appre-
hensive sense we

*Segnius irritant ani-
mos demissa per aures,*

*Quam quae sunt oculis
subjecta fidelibus & quae
ipse sibi maxime specta-
tor*

have, conveys its ob-
jects to the mind
with the greater
force, and makes the
deeper impression.

Here in my first Edition I had mention-
ed the making on our selves the sign of the
Cross, which could not escape being taxt
of Popery by some, that call by that name
every

every thing they dislike. I should not be much concerned at the charge, but that I find Popery is made a thing too ancient and too innocent, and so mistaken. It hath indeed abused that primitive Ceremony and made it subservient to superstition: but the right use of it is not therefore unlawful. Those zealous and holy Christians in the first ages who frequently signed themselves with that Sacred Sign, intended it as a tacit invocation of the name of Christ; as an outward profession that they owned him for their Lord and Saviour; and as a signature to themselves that they were devoted to his service, and ready to die for his sake.

I might produce and plead their reasons and example; the Custom of our Church, and its 30th Cannon, but that I would persuade no man to a rite so indifferent. If any will reiterate it on themselves, where they give no offence, to the same purpose as it was intended, when they were made Christians, *In token that they will not be ashamed to profess the faith of Christ crucified, &c.* I shall not condemn him: and I shall in no wise quarrel with them that omit it. If we sincerely love our Divine Master, and are faithful and obedient to him, it is no great matter what outward means and instruments we use.

But yet experience and the approbation of the best of men, have recommended these.

82 The Reformed Monastery; Or,

these I have now mentioned, as many ways useful and profitable. They and others of the like nature, and Church ceremonies, are said by Calvin, to assist our infirmities, to increase our devotion, and to make Religion more solemn and more venerable. *Inst. l.4.c.10. §. 28. & 31.*

So the great duties be secured, these are indifferent, and may vary according to circumstances: but yet they are not useless, nor totally to be rejected. Those outward rites and actions have an influence upon our hearts; they not only express our inward piety, but they increase it. Though they

Nescio quomodo, cum hi motus corporis fieri, nisi motu animi precedente non possint, iisdem rursus exterius visibilibus factis, ille interior invisibilis qui eos fecit, augeatur. Aug.

proceed from the affections, they re-act upon them, (as S. Augustine saith) they augment that fervour which at first produced them.

And so said a Blessed Martyr of our Church, that the true inward worship of God while we live in the Body, needs external helps, and all little enough to keep it in any vigor.

These voluntary observations should not lead them to scruple or censoriousness that are pleased to use them; and should not be clamoured against by others indiscreetly and uncharitably: for in themselves they are *adminicula pietatis*, hand-maids

maids to devotion and holy contrition. And they that know themselves are sensible that they want all possible helps to stir them up and relieve their dulness. When our understandings are convinced we have not quite done, means must be used also to affect the fancy and to ingage the affections. *And he had need be very sure of his strength, that refuseth the assistance of all auxiliaries.*

CHAP. XXV.

A passionate Meditation on the Passion of our Blessed Saviour.

MY love is crucified, said that loving and holy Martyr Ignatius, declaring how earnestly he wished to die for J E S U S : and so, considering the passion of J E S U S, I meditate with him ;

Ζῶν ὁ ὑμῶν γέ-
γω ἐγὼν τῆ ἀποδα-
νείν, ὁ ἐμὸς ἕρω
ἐσαύρω.

My love is crucified, my dearest Saviour dies in most bitter pains ; he hath been rudely bound and drag'd from place to place ; he hath been stript, tied to a post, and whipt like a vile slave ; he hath been buffeted and caned, and abused with all manner of

contu-

84 The Reformed Monastery, Or,

contumelies; and now I see him crowned with thorns, all over spittle and blood. I see him stretched upon the Cross, where his hands and his feet are nailed; his head hangs down; I read in his pale face and his weeping eyes, the extremity of his pain, the anguish of his wounded soul.

O Domine Jesu Christe, si intelligentia quam mihi dedisti uti vellem sicut deberem, cernerem manifeste, quo modo, ino quam sine molo, a me creatura tua amari merueris, qui prior dilexisti me; tantum & tantum, & gratis tantillum, & talem, & ingratum. Idiot.

Lord art thou he whom my soul loveth? art thou my dearest JESUS! were it my father, my brother, my friend, or my benefactor that should suffer this undeservedly, how would I pity them! but should they suffer this upon my account, Lord, I

could not outlive such a sight! if nothing else, love would certainly wound my soul to death. But behold it is so; this crucified, this dying man is my father, he gave me my being; he is my brother, he came down from heaven and took humane flesh, that he might have that relation to me; he is my friend, he lays down his life to save mine; he is my greatest benefactor, from him I receive all I have; all the blessings, the good things I enjoy I owe to his kindness.

But now my soul, suppose that from his Cross

Cross thou shouldest hear him, thus expressing his love, and bespeaking thine.
 "Christian, dearest Christian, for whom
 "here I die ; consider seriously, imprint it in
 "thine heart, what in my words, what in my
 "mysteries, thou readeest of my suffering for
 "thee ; consider who I am, what I endure,
 "and to what end. I am the eternal Son of
 "God whom the Angels adore : I became
 "Man to make thee partaker of the Divine
 "Nature ; I am infinitely rich, the whole
 "universe is mine : I became thus desti-
 "tute of all things to purchase true riches
 "for thee ; I am of an Almighty Power,
 "the whole world was made and subsists
 "by me : I am now weak to make thee
 "strong, I am overcome of mine enemies
 "to make thee conquer thine ; I am
 "crowned with glory, and clothed with
 "Majesty : I now wear these thorns, and
 "am become naked, to cloth thee with
 "robes of righteousness, and Crown thee
 "with a Royal Diadem ; I am the inex-
 "haustible fountain of joy and happiness :
 "I now endure sorrows and miseries, to
 "make thee joyful and happy ; I am in-
 "finitely pure and innocent : I am be-
 "come a sacrifice for sin, to merit thy
 "pardon, and to sanctifie and make thee
 "holy ; I am the Author of life, *the first*
 "*and the last* : I now die to make thee live
 "for ever ; nothing but love moves me
 thus

86 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

“ thus, to suffer for thee, and nothing but
“ love I require for it. Dearest soul, thy

*Aspice serve Dei, sic me
posuere Judei.*

*Aspice mortalis, pro te
datur hostia talis.*

*Aspice devote, quoniam
sic pendeo pro te.*

*Introitum vite reddo ti-
bi, redde mihi te.*

*In cruce sum pro te, qui
peccas desine pro me.*

*Desine de veniam, dic
culpam, corrige vitam.*

“ sins are more grie-

“ vous to me than my

“ wounds ; add not

“ sorrow to my sor-

“ row by remaining

“ impenitent ; deny

“ not this request to

“ thy dying bleeding

“ Saviour, that thou

“ wouldest mortifie

“ thy lusts and for-

“ sake thy sins ; all

“ that is past I heartily forgive, if thou be-

“ comest true penitent. I freely give my

“ self for thee, and beg that thou wouldst

“ give thy self to me.

To this, O my Soul, with the greatest
love and wonder thou maist thus reply.
What shall I say now, dearest Lord ? Words
cannot answer thee. I am amazed, I am
astonished, I know not how to speak, my
tongue cannot express what my heart feels.
Lord, I will say nothing ! I will answer
with sighs and tears, with devout affecti-
ons, by resigning and giving up my body
and soul to thee. I will answer by obedi-
ence, by actions ; by now falling to work
to reform my life, to mortifie my sinful
lusts, to cut off the members of the body of
sin.

sin. Sweetest *JESU*, I will love thee with all the affections my heart can entertain; no bosome sin shall be so dear to me; but for thy sake I will heartily part with it; no lust shall be so pleasing, but I will kill it, at thy request and command; even my natural desires and inclinations will I gladly deny, when they come in competition with that duty and love I owe, and ever will pay my dearest *JESUS*. Sweetest Lord it was I, had deserved to be smitten, to be covered with shame, to be deprived of life: and thou sufferest all these for me; for me vile wretch; for me my Lord; was it for me? O where shall I find such another friend? or rather what shall I do, to requite thy kindness and mercy? I can give thee nothing but love and thanks; and that will I do. O my Blessed Lord who wast spet upon; I humbly worship thee. Thou wast reviled like a vile slave; I praise thee, and own my self thy servant. The Jews refused thee for their King; but thou art mine, thou art my Blessed Master. I care not what becomes of me here, so I may come to bless and adore thee for ever! Lord, if there is a place where thou art not loved and magnified, let me never come into it. Assist me dearest Lord, let no pleasure or pain, no fear or hope, no profit or loss, no temptations within or without, ever make me to offend

88 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

offend thee. O ye Spirits and Souls of the Righteous, praise ye the Lord, praise him, and magnifie him for ever! O that I could but join with you, to expresse worthily my thanks and gratitude! O that all the world would join with me to praise and glorifie the Lord that died for us! Blessed J E S U, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of thy holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnifie thy holy name, now and for evermore. Amen.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of a sincere amendment which must be wrought by proper means.

BUT fickle and unhappy creatures, that we are, we often promise well, but seldom stand to our engagements; our resolutions are good and our performances very defective; *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.* I must not therefore, O my Soul, rest in generals, but I must resolve more especially against those sins I am inclined to: and not only against them, but also upon the means whereby I may overcome and mortifie them; as avoiding the occasions and inticements, inflicting on my self

self such severities, as may be proper remedies, and tying my self to such pious exercises, as I know will drive away the temptation. To forsake my sins, is not to forbear drunkenness, when perhaps I am not inclined to it; or to avoid swearing, when I look upon it as an displeasing and unprofitable sin; or to hate covetousness, when by nature I am liberal: but, knowing what sin pleaseth me most, what vice my temper inclines me to, and what temptation is most strong and importunate upon me, by my calling or my company, against that to fortifie my self, and imploy the utmost of my strength; against that to watch and pray, and use sincere and earnest endeavours. To forsake my sins, is not to say, I will forsake them. Some men, when they are called upon by fear, adversity, or the secret voice of God within them, are forward enough to ingage with the Elder Brother in the Gospel, *Lord, I will go and work in thy vineyard*: but their hot zeal and hasty promise, soon decays into negligence, and at last into a cold denial. Though I resolve against my natural corruptions never so seriously, that will not subdue them, without I use proper means for it; to take up my cross and follow Christ, to forsake all for him, to deny my self, to take the kingdom of heaven by force, to cut off my right hand, and pluck out my eyes when they offend,

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90 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

is more than barely to resolve, and promise high and proceed no further. *They that are Christ's have, not only verbally renounced, but actually crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24. therefore now, I have given up my self to Christ, and desire ever to be his, I must pray heartily, and watch diligently against my sins, those especially that are most pleasing and customary to me; I must, like S. Paul, not fight in the air against generals, but keep under my body, be temperate in all things, and strive to the utmost for the incorruptible crown; I must use that violence to my self, such harsh applications, acts of penance and mortification, of my own or the Spiritual Physicians appointment, as are fit and requisite to cure my distemper, to expel or reform that evil inclination which is inconsistent with my love to J E S U S.*

To that end it will be very useful frequently to meditate on the passion of Christ, the day of our change, our appearance in judgment, the joys of heaven, the torments of hell, and the amazing consideration of Eternity: and I am perswaded that it would be an excellent instrument of Reformation, and very useful in many cases, to acquaint the Spiritual Judge and Physician with the distempers of our Souls and the state of our conscience. But what ever means we use for our amendment, we must

be

be sure that they be effectual. And as he that would cure a natural evil, applies a stronger remedy where a weaker is found insufficient : so must he that would cure the spiritual diseases of his soul, still use stronger applications ; boggle at nothing that may be requisite to escape his danger and recover his health. But be sure we really desire to be healed, for then all things conducing to that end, will be welcome and acceptable. *Si desideras, via brevis est & facilis : si negligis, longa est & laboriosa.* Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things ; now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible : He that would vanquish his antagonist, was in the first place to vanquish himself, to endure hardship and severity, and use all endeavours for the victory, for a fading garland : so he that will overcome his lusts, and master himself, and obtain that heavenly crown which never fadeth, must use great industry, many arts, all means that can conduce to that end.

CHAP. XXVII.

Love the best instrument of Self-Reformation and true penitence, with an act of hearty contrition.

BUT the voluminous directions of Casuists and Confessionists cannot reach all cases and all particulars : to shorten our labour therefore, let the love of *JESUS* do the work of self-reformation and it will be soonest and best done. Love will find out the most effectual means for the extermination of our sins, and love will use them to the best purpose. Certain it is, that love in all instances, sets men upon acts of self-denial ; as great Generals and many more, who forego the peaceable enjoyment of the comforts they might have at home, and expose themselves to dangers, because they love honour ; merchants who forsake their dearest relations, and run through many great troubles and perils, because they love gain ; and the more generous love of friendship, which hath caused many to chuse great inconveniences and even death to serve their friends : and therefore certain it is also that the love of

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JESUS will make his yoke and even his Cross easie ; will make us deny our selves and forbear what displeaseth him, though otherwise pleasing to us. That men might be without excuse, God hath made a short work upon the earth :

" (saith S. Aug.) by
" contracting his im-
" mensity into the
" narrow dimensions
" of man, he hath
" abbreviated his do-
" line and our task.

*Ut nemo habet excusa-
tionem in die judicii ve-
luit Deus, sicut scriptum
est, consummare & abbrevi-
are verbum super ter-
ram. Aug. de Doct. Chri-
stiana. l. i. c. i.*

JESUS is the Center and the sum of our Faith and Religion, and the love of JESUS is the content of our duty. I have determined, (saith S. Paul) not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified, and we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness : but to them that are called, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God, 1 Cor. 2. 2. and 1. 24. that is, in whom God fully reveals his will, and gives us full power to fulfil it. Therefore (saith the Apostle) God forbid that I should glory (ave in the Cross of Jesus Christ my Lord ; by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Gal. 6. 14. The knowledge and love of JESUS, our Crucified Saviour, is the most proper means to teach us our duty, the greatest motive to undertake it, and the best in-
strument

94 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
strument to perform and effect it withall;
it will kill our lusts, crucifie the members
of the body of sin, and carry us through
the labours and difficulties of penitence
and sincere amendment: it will be the ful-
filling of repentance, as it is *the fulfilling of*
the law.

For, as love is strong to overcome strong
enemies, to kill the greatest sins: so is it
wise and quicksighted to see and to find
out the least. A loving friend will not only
not slander and defame his friend, nor
rob, or strike, or murder him: but will
forbear all words and actions which
might bring him the least grief or incon-
venience; love will not only not give the
greatest provocations; but even not dis-
oblige or displease in the least instances.

And now my soul, I must apply this
home, and thereby examine how true are
my resolves and protestations, if my love
to *JESUS* my Lord be sincere, it will
not only keep me from confederation with
his profest and greatest enemies, but even
make me shun and forsake the most secret
and contemptible of them: I mean that
the love of *JESUS* will never suffer me
to entertain any the least sin; and when-
ever I find that I have been unhappily se-
duced to commit any, it will cause me to
grieve and sadly to repent, that I have dis-
pleased my dearest Saviour, and wounded
that

that tender love I owe him; and profess ever to have for him. And indeed, it is reported of many devout persons, great lovers of *JESUS*, that they would sorrow and weep for ordinary failings, for small omissions, more than others would, for much greater sins. Divine Love, like a bright burning flame, will feel a commotion and disturbance by the least drop of water that falls upon it: a small irregularity will be more grievous to a pious lover of *JESUS*, than great crimes to another. Therefore he that could say, *the love of Christ constraineth us*, would also highly complain, and groan under the sense of our unavoidable imperfection; *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. Nothing will make us more sensible of our least and most common sins, than the love of *JESUS*; it will make us angry at, and impatient of them, and earnest and severe in reforming of them.

Now therefore as I profess my self a sincere and affectionate lover of *JESUS*, I am obliged to undo, as much as may be, what I have done amiss, and to do it no more: this earnestly and vigorously I must now resolve, and beg the divine grace an assistance to perform it. I must make amends and restitution to those I have any ways

ways damaged in body, goods, or name, and even ask their pardon for the injury : and then bewail my sins, grieve that I have offended my Divine and loving Master, and beg his forgiveness,, and endeavour by tears and contrition to wash away the stains and spots wherewith my soul is polluted, and displeaseth the holy eyes of the Holy *J E S U S*. And so to own and to love *J E S U S* my Master, binds upon me all the duties of holy penitence ; repentance must now be my my work ; and I must live like a true penitent. Especially on *Lent*, *Fridays*, and such other times as the Church appointed, and devout Christians use for mortification, and more solemn devotion. I must then, and even every night call my ways to remembrance. And (besides those greater provocations wherewith I have offended my Lord, in the days of my folly and inconsideration) I ought also to take notice of those sins of daily incursion I have committed ; and weep over them all, and beg for pardon : and this I say, especially on penitential days. For though true contrition should always abide in the heart of every one that truly loves *J E S U S*, yet there are occasions and proper times to bring it forth ; when we are to make it our business to soften our hearts, and make them melt into penitent tears. Which must be done by religious exercises, pious medi-

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meditations, and such acts of contrition as this.

My dearest *J E S U S*, I owe to thy kindest goodness, my being and all the blessings I enjoy ; and I know that thou didst come down from heaven to die on the Cross, that I might not die in hell to eternity ; to suffer a bitter and shameful death, that I might live in eternal joys. I hope to see thy glorious face, one day ; I hope to receive a crown from thy gracious hands ; I hope to dwell in thy blissful society for ever. Dearest Saviour, if thou wert upon earth, I would go all the world over to prostrate my self before thee, to kiss the ground thy Holy Feet should tread, to serve thee to shew my love and gratitude to thee. Dearest Lord, I would now joyfully give up my life for thee ; I would lose the last drop of my blood to please and glorifie thee ; I would die rather than deny thee. Why then, unhappy wretch that I am, do I offend thee, to whom I owe my self, and all that I have ? Why do I wound thee by my transgressions, who wast wounded for them, by thy love ? Why do I grieve thee, who purchasest eternal joys for me ? Why do I displease thee, with whom I hope to live and dwell, and from whom I expect mercy and salvation ? Why do I sin against thee, whom I love with all my soul ? and why do not I

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live

98 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*
live to thee, for whom I would die. Lord,
if what thou hast done and suffered for me,
be not able to win my heart, what canst thou
do more ? but O break and yield sinful
heart of mine ; open the way to tears and
grief ; and let the love of thy dearest Sa-
viour, enter, and fill, and ever possess thee.

CHAP. XXVIII.

*That Love will sweeten as well as produce
the truest penitence : and that true
wisdom, not melancholly is the guide
of sincere penitents.*

Such considerations and soliloquies as
these will produce not only *lacrymas*
doloris, tears of grief, but also *lacrymas*
amoris, tears of love and true contrition ;
and moreover will make pleasant all the
severities of repentance which are so un-
acceptable and so repugnant to nature :
those things that would be ungrateful, as
acts of justice on our selves, or obedience
and submission to a severe Master, will be-
come delightful as acts of love to a gracious,
beloved Lord. *In amore nihil amari*, in
love all things are sweet that are done or
suffered,

suffered, for the sake of the beloved. *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake*, saith *S. Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 10. that great lover of *J E S U S*; not that those things are of their own nature pleasant, whether inflicted by our selves or others; 'twas *for Christs sake* that he liked them. He likewise that by self-denial, and revenge on himself, expressing his sorrow for his sins, shews his love to *J E S U S*, is certainly delighted with the most afflictive of those voluntary sufferings, as they are expressions of his love. Accordingly 'tis said of some Religious persons, that their watchings, and fastings, and all the severities to which they had tied themselves as exercises of true repentance, became in process of time, so pleasant to them by the devoutness of their affections, that they were afraid of having their Paradise here in this world, and consulted their Spiritual guide about it. And certainly nothing but love could carry the primitive *Solitaries* and *Cœnobites* through that uneasiness and hardship they willingly undertook, and endured many years, and rejoiced in, and would not have exchanged for all the pleasures in the world; they being persuaded that thereby they recovered and secured the favour of *J E S U S* whom they loved, and whose love they esteem-

100 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
ed more than all worldly enjoyments.

Perhaps it will be said by some, that such things are the effect of melancholy, or a forward and misguided zeal, not of true piety. But let it be considered, that natural love it self hath done, and still doth wonderful things. The love of friendship, the love of lust, the love of riches and ambition have set men upon difficult attempts, have made them despise great dangers, have carried them through many labours and sufferings, and perhaps as great as the most mortified Christian ever undertook for *J E S U S* and Eternity. This hath been and is still the effect of Natural Love, and sure Divine Love, whose object is so infinitely more excellent, may do at least as much.

Besides, things temporal seem great at a distance; but near at hand, they appear as they are indeed, mean and contemptible: whereas contrariwise, things eternal, as they seem small and despicable afar off, so near at hand they appear great and immense, they overwhelm the mind. Hence it is, that dying men who are on the brink of eternity, are amazed at the thoughts and near prospect of it, and express great regret for their past inconsideration, and promise great things for the future, if they might live longer:
looking

looking upon the world, as an empty nothing, not to be regarded where eternity appears ; and hence it is also, that they, who approach things eternal, and view them by meditation and contemplation are of the same mind, have the same apprehensions of them, and act accordingly ; doing those things which dying men repent they have not done. For indeed, it is no illusion or deceit, but a great and real truth, that the world and all its concerns are nothing, compared to eternity : and that we can never be too careful to obtain eternal joys, and avoid eternal sorrows.

How much the blessed Apostles and primitive Christians were acted by this consideration, *S. Paul* gives us to understand, saying, that whilst they look not on things visible and transitory, but on things invisible and eternal, then their afflictions were *light and but for a moment*, 2 Cor. 4. 16, &c. though they lasted many years, and were so great, that the very thoughts of them can make us tremble, yet they were light and momentary, whilst they looked on eternity : and *they fainted not, though their outward man decayed daily*, by their great mortifications, and their laborious zeal to serve God ; and all this, *whilst we look not on the things that are seen, but on the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not*

seen are eternal. So that it is the effect of a wise and most rational consideration, to value and love him above all things, who by dying for us, hath rescued us from eternal ruine, and obtained eternal happiness for us: and to make it appear by all means possible, doing or suffering any thing that may manifest our love to *J E S U S*, and assure us of a blessed eternity. It may justly be feared that the indevotion and lukewarmness of very many, not the worst of Christians, will not make them acceptable to God, who declares that he will *spue them out of his mouth that are neither hot nor cold*, Rev. 3. 16. and that their carelessness and indifferency in religious duties, will hardly secure their eternal interest. However I think that it is a shame, to see *Benedictines*, *Franciscans*, *Carthusians*, and others, forsake the merriments, pleasures and honors of the world, rise up early, and late go to rest, wear nothing but Cilices and coarse cloth, feed poorly and lie hard: and all this, and much more to observe the Rule of *S. Bruno*, *S. Francis*, or some other fanciful or melancholy *Devoto*, who obliged them to some absurd, some needless, and many uneasie observations: from whom they never received any benefit, and from whom they can expect no kind of remuneration: and at the same time to see Christians nice and dainty, unwilling to de-

prive

prive themselves of any pleasure, or to undergo any thing of hardship, for to observe the most reasonable, holy and advantageous Rule of Christ ; from whom they have received the greatest favours, from whom they expect the greatest rewards, and to whose service and obedience they have devoted themselves, by a solemn vow, in holy Baptism.

CHAP. XXIX.

That severities and mortifications well regulated, are subservient to Repentance and the Love of J E S U S.

I know that some put too great a stress on such outward observations and corporal austerities, and whilst they pervert the right use of them, greatly abuse themselves, and it may be deceive others also : but withall it must be granted, that others, in the other extreme, as unadvisedly reject and condemn them as unprofitable and superstitious ; and as unreasonably count themselves Religious because they despise, as other because they are fond of them. I shall not determine which of the two are in the worst error. Both certainly are

mistaken ; and the truth I apprehend to be this. The example of our Blessed Saviour, which is our best pattern and most profitable lesson, plainly declares that such exercises are of great use, if not necessary, in our spiritual warfare against sin and temptations. So likewise the precepts of *cutting off our right hand or foot*, when they make us offend ; of *denying our selves*, and *taking up the Cross* ; and many more to the same purpose, make it our duty to use the proper and appointed means of mortification. And that they are acceptable to God, we are assured by Christ himself ; *When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, but anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast, but to thy Father which sees in secret : and thy Father which sees in secret shall reward thee openly*, Mat. 6. 18. Here fasting stands for all acts of self-denial, as being the most afflictive : and though the measures thereof be not described, yet that God hath a great respect and recompense for it, as well as for prayers, and alms, is clearly affirmed by our Blessed Lord. So that their remains no doubt, but that all corporal austerities prudently undertaken and managed, whether of our free susception, or appointed to us by our Spiritual Guide, or the Governours of Christs Church, to whom we are bound to submit our selves, (they being in his stead

to us ;) there is no doubt I say, but that these, especially the last, are generally very profitable ; in some cases absolutely necessary ; and always well pleasing to God. They are instruments of Religion whereby our lusts are subdued; the body kept under ; and the Spirit it self mortified. They are marks of the sincerity of our sorrows, and our regret to have offended God. And they are testimonials of our love to J E S U S, and our earnest desire to secure our duty to him for the future. All this is attested and proved true, not only by holy Scripture, and the injunctions of the Christian Church : but also by the practice and experience of all devout persons, affectionate lovers of the Blessed J E S U S.

C H A P. XXX.

A short Meditation for penitential days.

REmember that Fasting and Alms are the two wings of Prayer : and that all three must unite their strength to raise our heavy hearts from this earth, and lift them up to the regions of Love. All three together ascended as a memorial before God, to plead for *Cornelius*. And our
F 5 Blessed

106 *The Reformed Monastery; On,*

Blessed Saviour in one Sermon, *Mat. 6.* joined them all three, and assigned to them one reward.

Thus therefore meditate O my Soul, on thy days of humiliation.

My Blessed Lord, I know that I have been too much addicted to sensual pleasures : and now to speak my grief for it, here I mourn and afflict my self ; judging my self unworthy even of those refreshments, thou hast allowed me. I have too much served Mammon, and been too greedy of the world : and now I devote all I have to thee ; giving this as an earnest that all I have is thine, and that now I will use it for my self with more moderation, and spend it on others with greater charity ; that thou maist be acknowledged and glorified for thy gracious gifts, and I may speak my dependence on thee. My heart hath been too far from thee, and for my negligence in thy service, thou mightst justly blot my name out of the list of thy Servants, but here I return to thee with tears and prayers, begging that still thou wouldst be my Lord and Master, and I may be more faithful and active in waiting upon thee. I pour out my soul before thee, desiring it may evermore cleave unto thee most affectionately : and that no creature whatever may ever be able to draw
me

me from that love and duty I owe thee.

Lord, had I offended any earthly Prince, that had power on me, in that grievous manner as I have offended thy Divine Majesty, I should be loaded with irons, cast into a dungeon, and never admitted to see his face, and to beg his pardon. But thou givest me liberty and invitest me to plead for my self; to come and prostrate my self at thy feet, to implore thy mercy, to retract my folly, and shew how much I am grieved for it; and if I am sincere in this, I am assured of thy pardon, and that thou wilt receive me to favour again.

Lord, I beseech thee, as it is written in thy Book that I have sinned, so therein let it be registred that I truly repent; that I judge and punish my self; and indeavour what I can to undo and recall it again. Let the penance I here perform, my sighs and tears, my prayers and bitter sorrows, intitle me to the merits of thy precious blood; let them stand on record, that I may be justified at the last day, to have been a true penitent; that here the judgments I have deserved may be turned from me; that having been here numbred among thy Servants, who duly own thee before men; I may hereafter be numbred among thy Saints, in glory everlasting. And Lord, let my love to thee be proportionable

108 *The Reformed Monastery, Or,*
tionable to my sins and thy great mercies,
that I also may hear that blessed voice,
much is forgiven thee, because thou lovedst
much : and I may go and sin no more.

CHAP. XXXI.

*That repentance must loook forward, to
the securing of our duty for the time
to come. With instances and resolu-
tions to that effect.*

BUT one great half of repentance is yet
behind ; that which is most to be at-
tended to, that which I must chiefly de-
sign in all acts of mortification is, that I
return no more to those sins for the which
I grieve and afflict my self. I must not
only grieve that I have not forsaken those
lusts and vanities I renounced when I be-
came a Christian. : but I must now actually
forsake them and perform my vows. Ex-
cept I do this, my repentance is vain, and
my love not sincere. True contrition doth
include love, and love includes an hearty
obedience. But here lies the difficulty.
The occasions and inticements of sin will
doubtless come again ; my thoughts will
not

not always be fixt upon Divine Objects, my mind will return to the world ; my passions will be disorderly and my appetite unruly again : how shall I stand and resist, and be safe, in the time of danger, in the hour of trial and temptation ? this I must do, this I resolve to do ; devoutly to lift up my Soul to *J E S U S* my Master, and beg his assistance ; to remember my engagements and my protestations, and consider how much I am bound to love and obey my Lord and Saviour rather than my lusts, and how infinitely much I shall gain by it ; to summon all the strength and all the powers of devout Love to my aid ; and to use all those means I have before resolved upon, for the resisting of temptations and doing my duty.

Thus, when a provocation to anger is given, and I find my heart rise, and my spirits take fire and grow turbulent ; instead of giving way to the mischievous passion, or suffering that it should proceed to hatred and revenge ; I will turn aside and check my self with the remembrance of my meekest Saviour, *who was led as a Lamb to the slaughter and opened not his mouth, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered the greatest injuries, yet used no threatening, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.* I will remember how ill it becomes me to be angry with others,

others, who have so much reason to be angry with my self for having so highly and frequently, provoked my God to anger; I will consider how ill it becomes me to be revengeful and severe to others, when all my hopes, and all my happiness depend upon forbearance and mercy; I will think of, and fear that just exprobration of my Lord against the revengeful, *thou wicked servant, shouldst not thou have had compassion on thy fellow servant, as I had pity on thee;* and I will remember that it is *JESUS* who died for me, *JESUS* for whom I would die, who intercedes for mine enemies; and so will rather rejoice that I have some of that kind of love to repay to my dearest Saviour, which he shewed to me when I was his enemy. If lust enticeth me to acts of impurity, I will call to mind the corruption and dissolution of this vile body of sin; I will think on my last account, the day of judgment, and the dreadful flames of hell; and I will remember him, who for me was crucified, and with whom my love hath crucified me; and that now is the time to make it appear that I love him, and to justify the sincerity of my protestations. And so, for covetousness, pride, intemperance, and all such temptations, I will reject their attempts and proffers, with indignation, as a true friend would scorn the solicitations to be-

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tray his friend, thus saying to my self, What, shall I be false to him I love, to him that loveth me, who hath shed his blood for me, and to whom I have often protested that I would even die for him? shall I break the sacred bonds of love, and my most sacred vows, and put my soul into a state of regret, unquietness, shame and sorrow for this vile transitory profit or pleasure? O my dearest *JESUS*, thou knowest that I love thee; I beseech thee, make that love victorious against thine enemies and mine. I would rather die than deny thee, for any interest in the world: and I hope, thou wilt not deny me at the last day, but own me among thy faithful servants. Lord, I serve thee not for nothing; great are the reasons why I should obey thee: thou hast done much for me, and from thee I still expect much; infinite rewards for such due and poor services; Lord, let me die before I deliberately ever sin against thee, and forfeit thy love by falling from mine.

Thus, by love I resolve to conquer my self, to deny and mortifie my lusts; by love, I will strive to overcome all unlawful desires, all sinful motions: and then I shall rejoice in the victory. It shall not make me either proud or peevish, or severe to others: but rather humble and meek, cheerful and contented; so that it shall be seen by my
out.

outward deportment, how much pleasure and tranquillity my soul hath inwardly : that I rejoice in what I do for Christ ; that it is delicious to me to deny my self for his sake, to oblige so great, so true, so generous a lover as *J E S U S*, who hath done all acts of friendship for me, and owns me for his friend. *I call you not servants but friends, ye are my friends indeed, if ye do whatsoever I have commanded you, Joh. 13.14.* Those that are accounted gallant men in the world will venture their lives to second a friend in an idle, an unchristian quarrel: and their wounds they bear with courage and count them honourable, *'T was to serve a friend* ; how much more should I rejoice in that violence I offer to my appetites and unruly desires ; in what I do or suffer for to please and serve my heavenly, my best, my dearest friend, whom I can never love so much as he deserves : and in loving of whom, I am infinitely happier than if I should enjoy all the pleasures of sin, as long as I live. I only grieve and am displeased that I can do so little for him, that I can requite his love no better. I know that many persons have done far more for their less deserving friends, than I do, or can do for my Saviour *J E S U S*.

CHAP. XXXII.

*A singular example of humane Love,
with a short reflection upon it.*

“It is reported by Greek historians of
 “two loving sisters, *Eudoxia* and *Irene*
 “daughters to the
 “last unhappy Prince *Niceph. Gregor. Chal-*
 “of *Morea*, who with *condys.*
 “his life lost his
 “Crown and Country; that an uncle saved
 “them from the general desolation and
 “captivity which soon succeeded the lost
 “battel, and carried them to old *Andro-*
 “*nicus* their kinsman, then Emperour of
 “*Constantinople*. There, with pity, they
 “found a kind welcome, and as great re-
 “spects as they could wish. Their beauty,
 “their virtues and accomplishment surpass
 “their princely birth, and were as emi-
 “nent as their fortune was low: so that
 “young *Andronicus* who was to succeed in
 “the Empire, was in process of time taken
 “with *Eudoxia*, loved her passionately,
 “and obtained the Emperours consent to
 “marry her. This caused great troubles
 “to *Irene*, who liked it well as she loved
 he

" her sister, but could not but grieve at it,
 " as she loved the Prince (for unhappily
 " she had settled her affections on him.)
 " Upon this she fell sick, and almost to
 " death : and it being observed that some
 " distemper in her mind caused the di-
 " stemper of her body, her sister, pro-
 " testing of her love to her, assuring her
 " that *Eudoxia* should have only the title
 " and the trouble, but *Irene* the privi-
 " ledges and the power of an Empress, con-
 " jured her to declare what caused her dis-
 " content. Having understood what it was,
 " and grieving that she should be the occa-
 " sion of her sisters danger and sorrow,
 " she presently took from her head a jewel
 " the Prince had given her, in form like a
 " half-moon ; and with it she so wounded
 " and disfigured her face, that she cured
 " the Prince of his love, as she designed : and
 " afterwards retired to *Galliopoli*, where
 " she entred a Cloister, and devoted the
 " rest of her life to God. The Prince
 " finding in *Irene* what he had lost in *Eu-*
 " *doxia*, soon after entertained the same
 " passion for her, he had for her sister :
 " but *Irene*, remembering her sisters ge-
 " nerosity, forgot her affection to the
 " Prince ; considering what *Eudoxia* had
 " voluntarily suffered for her, how great,
 " how tender a love she had express'd in
 " what she had done, resolves to forsake

Andro

“*Andronicus*, to forgo her ease and pleasure, and what she had so earnestly desired, rather than be ungrateful. Whereupon she steals away from the Court, goes to *Galliopoli*, enters her sisters Cloister, and having exprest to her her love and acknowledgments, she takes the same vows, and resolves to live and die to God, and with her beloved sister.

This story makes me grieve and blush, that so little gratitude should be paid to *JESUS* for greater benefits, for that incomparable love he hath shewed men in dying for them; that I my self should so ill requite his much greater kindness, so poorly and imperfectly return his most wonderful love. What, shall I think it much to refrain my intemperance for his sake, who, for mine, fasted long and often, and tasted vinegar and gall? shall I think it much to mortifie my pride and anger for him, who, for my sake despised the shame of the Cross, and returned nothing but meekness to the greatest provocations? shall I think it much to refrain my worldly, covetous desires for him, who, for me, became poor, naked, destitute of all things, though he were Lord of all; shall I think it much, to deny my self some momentary sensual pleasures, for him who carried my sorrows, who shed his blood and was crucified to save me; No, my dearest *JESUS*,
thy

116 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*
thy love hath overcome my heart, I will
be no more what I have been, henceforth
it shall be my wealth, my delight, my
glory and ambition to serve and obey thee,
give thee all possible demonstrations of a
devout, a most passionate love.

CHAP. XXXIII.

*Some Scriptures to shew the necessity of
departing from Sin, according to our
Baptismal Vow. With some prote-
stations to conclude this first Part.*

THIS Repentance and Reformation is
what our Religion requires ; The
Scripture supposeth it in all that have em-
braced Christianity , and is earnest and
pressing in its exhortations to it. *We beseech*
you Brethren, and exhort you by the Lord J E-
S U S, that as ye have received of us, how ye
ought to walk and to please God; so ye would
abound more and more : for ye know what com-
mandments we gave you by the Lord J E S U S,
for this is the will of God, even your sancti-
fication, 1 Thess. 4. 1, 2. Again, but ye have
not so learned Christ (as to follow the gree-
diness and lusts of the Gentiles) If so be
that

that ye have heard of him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in JESUS, that ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. 4. 20 21. &c. And in another place, this change, being absolutely necessary, is absolutely supposed to be wrought in us by our imbracing the Christian Faith. If ye are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above ——— for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. — Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry ——— in the which ye walked sometime when ye lived in them, but now, you also put off these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, evil communication out of your mouth; lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him. Col. 3. 1, 2, &c. In these and many more places to the same purpose, it is plainly implied, that true Christians are mindful and careful to fulfil their baptismal promises; to renounce the devil and all his works, &c. It is not love alone that binds this duty upon us: our profession absolutely requires

118 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

requires it of all that have given their name to Christ, and expect Salvation from him. Love may inforce the obligation, and assist us to discharge it : but it is the design and the tenor of Christianity it self, to reclaim us from sin ; to sanctifie our affections, that our lives and actions may be holy as becomes the Gospel. *The grace of God which bringeth salvation, teacheth us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live in this present world soberly, righteously, and godly.* Tit. 2. 11. 12. This is the sum of our duty : that we should be temperate in our bodies and minds, just and charitable in our intercourse with other men, and pious in our minds, devout in acts of Religion and worship to God, the learning and practising this lesson is that whereby the offered salvation is obtained and laid hold on ; that whereby we must make it appear, that we indeed own Christ for our Lord and Saviour, and that we do truly love him with all our hearts and souls.

Now therefore I must remember that I am not mine own, I am his that made and redeemed me ; I am his to whom I have given my self, when I undertook *manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world and the devil.* To me is addrest that exhortation, *Thou, O man of God, flee these things* (strifes, disputes and covetousness, before

before mentioned) and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, 1 Tim. 6. 11, 12. I am become a Souldier of JESUS ; to me S. Paul speaks, as well as to Timothy, Thou therefore endure hardness as a good Souldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth intangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Souldier, 2 Tim. 2, 3, 4. If I were in the Militia of any other Prince, I might endure hardness enough, before I could obtain his favour, or indeed be taken notice of ; heat and cold, hunger, thirst and weariness, sleepless nights and perpetual dangers ; all this, and much more I might endure many years, and not be looked on ; here my General hath prevented me with his kindness ; he first fought against mine enemies ; he first loved me, and endured hardship for me ; and he notes every thing I suffer for him, sets it down, and assigns a reward to it. Under another Commander I might do brave actions, behave my self valiantly, and yet not be seen : here my General hath always his eyes upon me, he encourageth me ; and rejoiceth to see my fortitude ; he is alway ready to help me, and is most delighted, when he sees me zealous and diligent. I might fight long enough for an earthly King, I could only get a poor subsistence

sistence or an empty fame, but never so much as one province of his dominions: here, fighting for my heavenly King, I shall get unvaluable treasures, immortal glory, and a Kingdom which shall have no end, *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, Rev. 3. 21.* I will therefore, never again, fight against the captain of my salvation, and I will never forsake him; I will often renew my vows, often swear allegiance to him, upon that sacred blood which he shed for me, and which he gives me to comfort and strengthen my heart; I will daily think on those things that may increase my zeal and diligence, and help me to resist temptations; and I will suffer any thing, use all means possible to perform these resolutions, and approve my self unto death, a lover of *J E S U S*. If any man loves not the Lord *J E S U S*, let him be *Anathema Maranatha*.

F I N I S.

T H E
Reformed Monastery ;
O R,
The L O V E O f
J E S U S.

The Second Part.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Henry Brome*, at the Gun in
S. Paul's Church-yard, the West-End.
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T H E
P R E F A C E.

I Have now gone through the greater half of my task, the negative part of our Baptismal Vow, and of our Duty. The greater half I call it, because our Nature stands not in æquilibrium, in an indifference betwixt good and evil, but is depraved and ill inclined: and the way to vertue will be smooth and pleasant, when once by grace and love we have renounced our sins, and our vicious propensities are both subdued and rectified.

If therefore thou hast entred and liked this Cloister so far, thou maïest safely advance further, and go through what remains; if thou hast approved and observed its Rules hitherto, the rest cannot but be acceptable and easie to thee.

The PREFACE.

As a Traveller in a strange Enemy-Country meets with many hardships and dangers, but at home amongst friends delights in journeying : So the Love of J E S U S among the works of the devil, the sinful lusts and vanities of this world, might meet with difficulties and a rugged way; but now conversing with faith and good works, the holy will of God and his glorious rewards, it will proceed with joy, and a pleasant speedy progress.

I have called the Love of J E S U S The Reformed Monastery, partly to work upon thy fancy, that by thy Christian profession thou mightest think thy self as entred into a new state of life, and cloistered in from loose company and sinful enjoyments : and also to give thee to understand that though thou beest not under any severe monastick ingagements, yet by thy being a Disciple and servant of J E S U S thou art bound to be strict and watchful over thy self; to use those remedies against sins and temptations, and those proper helps to devotion, which are
useful

The PREFACE.

useful and subservient to Vertue and Religion, and will assist thee to secure thy duty and thy happiness. Old heresies we know often revive and appear under a new dress : and it may serve the ends of true goodness and piety to diversifie Christian instructions, and to bring them forth under new and different forms. What one is not moved withall, may affect another ; and the very novelty of a name or method may make that to be looked upon, which otherwise would pass unregarded.

I know that I have fallen very short of what my Subject could bear ; and perhaps some will think that I have not been full enough in my particulars and in my directions : but my only design was to beget and entertain Divine Love in our Souls, well knowing that that Love afterwards, would soon enlarge our hearts and our knowledge, and guide us right in all cases. If I can but teach thee, Reader, to love J E S U S with all thy heart, I am sure I have brought thee
into

The PREFACE.

*into the easiest and the only safe way to
Heaven. "He hath*

*Præcipuam Chri-
stianæ pietatis por-
tionem docuit, quif-
quis ad hujus in-
flamavit amorem.
Eras.*

*"taught the best part
"of Religion and to
"the best purpose,
"who hath taught
"others to love it.*

*And they certainly
love it, and obey it too, that truly love
its Author the Blessed J E S U S. If
we truly love him we shall afterwards
refuse him nothing. Where a man gives
his heart, he will neither refuse his hand
nor his knee, neither service nor worship;
where he gives his Soul and affections,
he will willingly bestow all the rest.
God shall certainly command us, and
all that we can dispose of, without any
reservation, if we secure our love to him.
Therefore Love is called the bond of per-
fectness. It is the onely qualification can*

*make us true Chri-
stians. "No other*

*Alia virtus cum
peccato, sed dilectio
tua omni peccato
contrariatur, omni*

"vertue but may

temptationi resistit.

consist

The PREFACE.

"consist with some sin, love alone is contrary to all; no other grace can resist all temptations, love alone hath that unlimited power. Nothing but love can enable us to discharge all obligations, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. All other gifts and virtues without love cannot fit a man for heaven, nor make him dear to God: but love can do it of it self. Love J E S U S sincerely and affectionately, and then you shall be sure to live here to him, and hereafter with him to eternity.

As there are Dragons that are bright and glittering, and have precious stones in their heads; as there are Comets that have the light and the elevation of stars: so there are vicious persons, false Christians that are indow'd with excellent parts, and are eminent in some virtues; but it profiteth nothing without love; If I speak the tongues of Men and Angels; (saith S. Paul, 1 Cor. 13. 1, &c.) If I have the gift of prophesie and understand all mysteries; If I have

The PREFACE.

all faith, so that I remove mountains; if I give my goods to the poor, and even my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing, and it profits me nothing, 1 Cor. 8. 1. Of all other gifts and abilities it may be said, as of knowledge, that they all puff up, but charity alone edifieth. Among those creatures which stand and worship before God, there is not only a Man and an Eagle, which may represent persons of great learning, fitted for high speculation, but also, a Lion and an Ox, whereby Christians of meaner parts and knowledge are signified: for these are capable of love as much as the others, and 'tis love alone qualifies men to dwell for ever in the embraces of the God of love; for God is love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him, 1 John 4. 16.

Amat Deus ut ametur, nil aliud vult quam amari, &c.
Aug.

" God loves men,
" that they may love
" him, and he onely
" requires that they
would

The PREFACE.

"would love him, knowing that that love
"is, of it self, sufficient to make them
"eternally happy. I have therefore all
along fitted my discourse and meditations
to every mans capacity and opportunities,
as much as I could : because all may love,
and all must that will be happy. And
though I may have recommended some
things as means and instruments : yet I
have prescribed nothing as a duty, but
the great obligations which were laid
upon us, when we were baptized into
Christ. So that in this Monastery all
must enter and live, that would live in
heaven : and the Rules and Orders of
it, should be observed by all that desire
to own Christ before men, and to be
owned by him at the last day. I might
indeed have here inserted many, perhaps,
not unuseful directions, given by Ancient
Fathers and Spiritual Guides, to such as
made profession of greater piety and strict-
er lives than others : but they could not
have suited with all conditions and cal-
lings : therefore I have appointed no other
rule.

The PREFACE.

rule to those that shall enter this Cloister, but the love of *J E S U S* in a sincere obedience to his holy precept, or a voluntary compliance with his Divine Counsels.

Not that I would deny that places for Religious Retirement might afford many great advantages, in order to greater devotion and heavenly mindedness : for I bewail their loss, and heartily wish that the piety and charity of the present age might in a just and primitive measure restore to this Nation the useful convenience of them. Necessary Reforms might have repurg'd Monasteries as

Multi sunt qui possunt Religiosam vitam etiam cum seculari habitu ducere, & plerique sunt qui nisi omnia reliquerint, salvari apud Deum nullatenus possunt. *Greg. M. Ep. ad Maur. Imp.*

well as the Church, without abolishing of them : and they might have been still houses of Religion without having any dependance upon Rome. All men are not inclining to, nor fitted for an

active

THE PREFACE.

active life ; some would be glad to find a place of rest and retirement for contemplation : some who, by melancholy or by the terrors of the Lord, are frightened from their sins and from the civilized world into Quakerism, into an unhappy sullenness and Apostasie, would perhaps exchange their silks and laces for the coarser garments of mortified professors of a Monastick life : and find, among them, that happiness and peace of the soul, which they vainly seek for, in their wretched and deluded Brotherhood. Some who, upon great afflictions and sudden changes of fortune, fall into a state of sorrow and tedious sadness, and are left in the world to struggle with the temptations of a discontented mind, would perhaps take Sanctuary in a Religious house ; and give themselves up wholly to J E S U S, and forget their temporal sorrow, by heavenly joys and meditations : and at last bless that storm and shipwreck which cast them into that unknown land of rest and safety. Some, that are forward
and

THE PREFACE.

ready to promise well and take good resolutions, have not strength enough to keep them, but are prevailed upon, by the importunity of those temptations they meet withall in the converse of men; they perhaps being fled from those occasions of sin, might, by the good example and good instructions of a Religious Society, secure themselves, and stand to their holy engagements. Some who never loved the world, or that are grown weary of it, or have passionate longings for heaven, would willingly free themselves of the cumbrances and distractions of worldly business, to enjoy the leisure and opportunities of meditations, devotion, and other spiritual exercises. And some that are much taken with the strict lives, and beads and orisons of Papist-Friers, would look home and spend their commendations on the purer Religion, and better ordered lives and devotions of those, in this Church, that should wholly devote themselves to God. However 'tis not to be denied, but that men are much affected and

THE PREFACE.

and influenced by the place, the company, the way of living, and the outward circumstances wherein they are engaged : and, I believe, it might be now as true a proverb as ever, *Benè vixit qui benè latuit*, he lives best and most safe, who is least acquainted with the world, and lives farthest from it.

I might add further, that such pious foundations or restitutions, might be so ordered as to afford a very great advantage to our Church and Religion. For thence persons of good parts and great piety, devoted to the advancement of the true Christian Faith, and free from those cares and cumbrances that are upon others, might be sent as Missionaries, to make it their business to reclaim persons of all sorts from schism, errors, and heresies, and even from looseness, and irreligion.

* Not but that we have an abundant supply of persons very well fitted for that blessed employment, from our great Seminaries of Learning. But their necessary

THE PREFACE

cessary attendance upon their Ministry and particular Cures, besides other avocations, deprive them of the leisure and opportunities of running after their strayed sheep. They can well guide and feed such as duly keep within their folds: but such as break out and wander, they have not time to seek after. And yet great is the number of these, especially about great Towns; where small encouragements, and stiff opposition are a great hindrance to the gaining of Converts; This excellent and charitable work, could be best done by them that should have nothing else to do. But first let every one work out his own salvation, and make sure work for himself, that will best enable him to work upon others.

But though we want some conveniences for withdrawing from temporal affairs, to mind eternity and our souls the better: yet we must go to heaven; wherever we live, we must live to God, that we may live with God; therefore

The PREFACE.

if we cannot have a
 material, we must
 have a Spiritual
 cloister, which may
 defend us against temptations, and guide
 and assist us in doing our duty. Such a
 one is the love of Jesus; it will protect
 us against all dangers and spiritual ene-
 mies, better than the strongest walls of
 any Abbey: and will make us devout
 and zealous in Gods service, beyond
 what the exhortations of the wisest Abbot
 could do. "Dum crescit fortitudo
 "amoris interni, infirmatur fortitudo
 "carnis, whilst love is strong the flesh is
 "mortified, and its lusts are subdued.
 "Greg. Mag. Amanti nihil est diffi-
 "cile, nihil impossibile, love can do all
 "things of its self, it passeth over all
 "difficulties, and there is no obstacle
 "which it overcomes not. August. Love
 can supply the want of all outward helps
 and advantages; let it but be our care,
 to secure love and it will secure us. Let
 us therefore feed and entertain it by read-
 ing

Claustrum ubiq;
 portate interius.
 Norb. ab. præmonst.

THE PREFACE.

Coelum & terra
& omnia quæ in eis
sunt non cessant mi-
hi dicere ut amem
Dominum Deum
meum. *Aug.*

*ing and meditation,
by frequent prayers
and acts of love, and
by observing and
tasting how gracious
the Lord is in all his
works ; all things*

in heaven and earth do incessantly
cry to us, that we should love God.
God draws us after him, Hos. 4. 11.
with cords of a man, with bands of
love, *therefore, by love, we can best fol-*
low him, 1 John 3. 18. But, let us
not love in word or in tongue, but
in deed and in truth: and hereby we
shall know that we are of the truth,
and we shall assure our hearts before
him.

The



T H E

Reformed Monastery ;

Or, the Love of

J E S U S.

C H A P. I.

*That Love obligeth us also to fulfil the
positive part of our Baptismal Vow ;
with a protestation of obedience to it.*



Y former disobedience and
rebellions against my Blessed
Lord and dearest Master, I
have examined and bewail-
ed ; I have considered that
by sin I wound and crucifie
him

2 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

him afresh, and therefore have resolved to sin no more, never to lift up hand or heart against him. But will love, be satisfied with this; is it a sufficient demonstration of love, not to abuse, not to injure a friend? No sure, I must proceed further; love requires more than this. I must not only abstain from what would anger him I love: but I should further do that that will please him. 'Tis part of my duty, as it was of my vow, not only to renounce the Devil and all his works; but also to believe all the articles of the Christian Faith, and to keep Gods holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

As for the Articles of the Christian Faith, I believe them from my heart, and resolve to own and confess them whilst I live; I never will dispute or object against them, and I hope, I should chuse to die, before I would renounce any of them; as for other less necessary doctrines, I will be guided by my Spiritual Governors; in controversies, I will submit to the judgment of that Holy Church, in whose Communion I live; and so I will read and ponder Gods Holy Word, especially the new Testament, that I may know my Masters will, and be encouraged to do it: not that I may find out new mysteries and maintain the private opinions of a party. It remains then only, that I should keep Gods Holy Will and Commandments,

commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life. And this I also undertake ; it shall be my daily and constant study and endeavour ; I resolve to obey to the utmost of my power : and I also promise further to manifest my love by free-will-offerings, as God shall enable me.

But first my love is to appear by doing what is commanded ; *This is the love of God that we keep his Commandments* (saith S John, 1 John 5. 3.) and *he that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me,* (saith our Blessed Saviour, John 14. 21.) There can be no love without obedience, this is its first and chiefest Tryal ; *if a man love me, he will keep my words,* ver. 23. Now then, should my beloved Lord ask me, as once he did S. Peter, N.N. *doest thou love me ?* would not my heart answer, with his zealous Apostle, *Yes Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee ;* ——— *I would lay down my life for thee,* John 21. 15. and 13. 37. Now, to this he replies again, *if thou lovest me, keep my Commandments,* John 14. 15. Every time we tell him, *Lord I love thee, thou knowest that I love thee.* He doth answer again, *if thou lovest me, keep my Commandments :* So that, without we observe this, we can no ways pretend to love him.

I am therefore to take notice of, and to amend

4 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

amend sins of omission, which too too many among Christians mind little, or not at all. In the matter of sobriety I am commanded, whether I eat or drink, to do it as all things else, to the glory of God ; and to be contented, whatsoever state I am in ; for chastity I am commanded to know how to keep my vessel in sanctification and honor ; for acts of corporal and spiritual mercy, I am commanded to be merciful, as my heavenly Father is merciful, and to forgive injuries, as I desire my self to be forgiven ; for reverence to my betters, I am commanded to honour and obey my superiors Ecclesiastical and Civil ; in what concerns Divine Worship, I am bound to read and pray, and meditate, to instruct my self and family, to receive the Blessed Sacrament, to have a veneration and respect for all things that belong or relate to God, and him to love and fear, and trust and adore evermore. All these, with the particulars included in them ; and all other duties, and the special precepts of the New Testament, is the task I cheerfully undertake, and in the performance whereof, I will approve my self a sincere lover of *J E S U S*.

CHAP. II.

How great a happiness in Eternity follows our love and obedience.

HIS yoke is easie and his burthen light, his Commandments are not grievous, and yet in keeping of them there is great reward: a temporal happiness, than which none is greater in this world, and an eternal happiness, infinitely greater than any this world can afford. Do not I see what pains most men are at to get a subsistence for this world? how they run and sweat and spend themselves to provide for this perishing life; which yet is miserable, short and uncertain? and shall I not labour for the meat which abideth to eternal life? shall I be at no pains to secure that life which hath no end, and knows no misery? O that I could duly understand the difference betwixt this life and the life to come! how would I slight the one, and desire the other! or rather how chearfully would I imploy this present, to obtain that which is to come! Is not there servants that work hard day by day, a whole year together for small wages; who are almost perpe-

6 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

perpetually employed about their masters business : and yet have sometimes no thanks, and often but a sorry reward ; and am not I one of those labourers whom my Lord hath hired to work in his vineyard ? *Mat. 21.* Am not I one of those servants, whom he hath intrusted with his goods, to whom he hath intrusted talents to improve for him ; and do not I desire he should tell me one day, *well done, thou good and faithful servant ?* *Mat. 21.* Is not my salary great, greater than any Prince on earth could make it, greater than I could wish, greater than I can comprehend ; eternal rest, eternal joys, eternal happiness, eternal glories ; eternity it self, he himself will be my reward. Eternity ! Eternity ! Eternity ! Blessed Eternity. Eternity never enough to be considered, Eternity never enough to be valued, shall I obtain thee by what I do here for my Lord ? shall I obtain thee by that imperfect service I pay to my gracious Master ?

O God who hast prepared for
Sixth Sund. them that love thee, such good
after Trin. things as pass mans understanding,
pour into our hearts such
love towards thee, that we loving thee above
all things, may obtain thy promises which ex-
ceed all that we can desire, through Jesus Christ
our Lord, Amen. Lord, I am not worthy
to be called thy Son ; I have often begg'd

The Love of J E S U S. 7

to be one of thy hired servants, the meanest, so I love and obey best. O let me, like thy servant *Moses*, ever have a respect to the recompence of the reward, ever consider what I shall get by serving thee, that I may be diligent, persevering and cheerful in doing my duty. O my soul, blush to consider how laborious men are for the unsatisfying acquiescence of this earth ; how eager thou hast been thy self in pursuing of them ; how slothful, how unactive and heavy thou art in working for eternal rest, for the treasures of eternity, for the glories of heaven, for those Divine Pleasures which are at the right hand of God for evermore. Whence comes this, unhappy soul, is it not from inconsideration ? because thou dost not lift up thine eyes to see whither the way of love and obedience will bring thee ; because thou dost not look beyond the world, upon things eternal ; because thou dost not often enough meditate upon heaven and eternity ; that unvaluable, infinite recompence which awaits thee, as soon thy work is finished. Resolve therefore to amend this, and daily, once at least, to consider what are thy wages, what thou shalt get by serving God. As the Apostle says of afflictions, that they are light and but for a moment, whilst we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : the same we may say of the most difficult
of

8 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

of Christian duties, that they are light and but for a moment, that they are easie and soon done; that there is no tediousness, no hardship in them, whilst we look upon things eternal, whilst we have a respect unto the recompence of the reward.

CHAP. III.

That to win our hearts and duty God propounds great rewards to us.

THis consideration doubtless, would be powerful and effectual, would wake and stir us up, and make us active and lively, if we had it often in our minds. Therefore our Blessed Saviour, to encourage his followers and make them diligent in his service, doth often give them to understand, what by parables and what by plain declarations, that they should not serve him for nought, and that they should be no losers by him; that he would consider them for their time, for their expenses, for their sufferings, and for their labours; that he would take notice of the least thing they should do for him; so that even a cup of water given for his sake should not go unrewarded; and that their reward would

fat

be great, bountiful and most excellent, far above their deserts, and even above their wishes and apprehensions : an angelick nature, a glory bright as the Sun it self, an eternal life, an heavenly, an endless kingdom, his own joys should be their portion and their recompence. And we find also the Holy Apostles, assuring those whom they brought to work in their Lords vineyard, that they should certainly have their hire, and be paid most generously for their work. *God will render to every man according to his deeds, to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality shall be rendred eternal life, Rom. 2. 6. 7. Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour, 1 Cor. 3. 8. And S. Paul, to encourage the Corinthians, tells them that we Christians are entred into a race, at the end whereof we may see the Laurel, palmam in stadio positam, a glorious prize, an incorruptible crown, if we will run and strive for it, 1 Cor. 9. 24. and he likewise tells the Ephesians, that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall be receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free, Eph. 6. 8. S. Peter also teacheth that we should be moved and encouraged, by the greatness of the promised reward, to forsake our lusts, and wholly devote our selves to God ; exceeding great and glorious promises are given unto us,*

H that

TO The Reformed Monastery; Or,

that by these you might be partakers of the Di-
vine Nature, having escaped the pollution that
is in the world through lust, 2 Pet. 1. 4.
Christ is become the author of eternal salvation
to them that obey him, Heb. 5. 9. And so the
result of all these may be comprehended
in the exhortation of S. Paul: My beloved
Brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always
abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch
as ye know that your labour is not in vain in
the Lord, 1 Cor. 15. 58. In this sense good
works are meritorious, in that they pro-
cure us a reward, a reward infinitely great-
er than their own desert. Let us not there-
fore, as the Apostle exhorts, be weary in well-
doing, for we shall reap in due season if we faint
not, Gal. 6. 9. Let us compare together the
returns of vice and vertue, how unlike are
the fruits of them: and let us bear this short
saying in our minds; if we do ill, the plea-
sure is soon past; the grief and punishment a-
bide long upon us: if we do well, the trouble
is soon ended, the joy and reward of it, remain
for ever. Let us pray with S. Paul, the
Lord direct our hearts into the love of God,
and the patient waiting for Christ, 2 Thes. 3. 5.
who when he comes, brings his reward
with him: and to this let us add this Col-
lect of the Church. Grant us grace, O Lord,
so to follow thy blessed Saints, in all virtuous
and godly living, that we may come to those
unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for
them

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Christ

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The Love of JESUS. 11

them that unfeignedly love thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

CAAP. IV.

That Love hath a secret pleasure, and reward in it self; with a meditation to that purpose.

BUT, Though it may encourage us to love that gracious God who gives so very much for that little we are able to do, yet Love it self is not mercenary; *charity doth not seek her own*, (saith S. Paul, 1 Cor. 13. 5.) we may desire our promised reward and set our affections upon it, as it is a demonstration of Gods infinite love and goodness: or because it will be the expressing of our duty and thankfulness, when we shall love and glorifie and adore God perfectly and for ever: or rather because the reward is God himself, who will be to every faithful servant, his exceeding great reward, Gen. 15. 4. as well as to faithful Abraham: rewarding sincere obedience with the fruition of himself, being all in all to his Saints. But still I say, Love is not selfish, but free and generous, if nothing were to be gained by it, it would

12 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

have great satisfaction in shewing it self: the work and labour of love is a noble pleasure to a pious heart. When he thus reflects on his obedience and thinks with himself. By the performance of this duty, by this act of vertue, I serve my dearest Lord, I oblige my best friend; I express my love to him whose infinite kindness to me hath conquered my heart, whom I love as my own soul, to whom I wholly give my self, and for whom I desire both to live and die.

O happy soul, who seekest what an exceeding joy it is to love *JESUS*! or rather unhappy soul, who canst shew so little love to *JESUS*! Unhappy necessities of a frail body, unhappy distractions of a troublesome world! Why am I, by you deprived of the continual pleasure of waiting continually on my Divine and most loving Master? But blessed be my gracious Lord, that I might have more opportunities of pleasing him, and expressing my affections to him, he hath made vertues of necessities, he hath turned nature into grace, and of humane duties he hath made acts of Religion. In relieving mine own and others wants, if I observe the rules of sobriety and charity, he takes occasion thence to bless and reward me, as if he were thereby glorified. In discharging the duties of my place and calling, if I am diligent and faithful;

faithful
mean.
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The Love of J E S U S. 13

faithful ; though my work be never so mean, he owns it as a service done to him. Servants (saith S. Paul) obey your masters in all things, and do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ. Col. 3. 22, 23. If I am conscientious in all my ways and works, he takes it as a mark of my love and part of my duty to him. O that the constant course of my conversation might speak the sincerity of my affection to my blessed Lord. Dearest JESUS, the Cross thou didst bear for me was heavy and painful to extremity : but thy yoke is light and pleasant, thy service is perfect freedom. O let it be my delight and daily employment as it is my duty, to serve and obey thee, to follow thy blessed example, and be instrumental in winning hearts to thee : let me love thee so intirely that I may love nothing but thee, nothing but for thy sake ; *Fac precor Domine, me gustare per amorem quod gusto per cognitionem, sentiam per affectum, quod sentio B. Ansel. per intellectum. Amen.*

CHAR.

CHAP. V.

Reflections on the vanity of temporal things; with some holy resolves and ejaculations.

CONSIDER O my soul, how deceitful, how vain is this present world; how inconstant and unsatisfying; how vexatious and troublesome. Doth not thine experience tell thee, that the more thou lovest the best of earthly thing, the more crosses and sorrows befall thee? the more thou enjoyest of them, the more weary thou art, the farther from happiness and true contentment? I have observed that the dead are soon forgotten, and that the world neither can nor indeed takes care, to do any thing for its greatest slaves and admirers after they are gone: and yet our greatest toil and vexation is to live here, so as to please the world. We are not pleased to have our wants supplied and to be free from pain, except the world be pleased also. That imaginary life which we live in the account of others, is by far the more troublesome and the more uncertain; for we are never well except others will think us to be

be so. But O my soul, why dost thou cumber thy self with so many things; even with things that have no existence but in thine, and other mens fancy? *one thing is necessary*; love God, and seek his heavenly Kingdom, and thou art rich and happy to the full.

Let thy thoughts wait one while on the most prosperous sinners in the world; how empty is their soul; how distracted their mind; how restless their conscience? Do they not live in a storm and hurry? and at last sink into the grave, with the greatest regret and bitterness? and what would they not give in the day of vengeance, that they might pass from the left to the right hand of their Judge. Consider and tremble; with what amazement and impotent rage they will struggle to change their place, that they might change their doom! But now turn and follow the just. See their inward peace and their secret joy; what comfort they have in their afflictions; what hope in their lives; what undaunted assurance in their death! but who can express those endless pleasures, those ravishing joys wherein they enter, when they come to enjoy and see him face to face, whom here they loved and sought after? O my deluded heart, be not deceived by vain appearances; that is certainly true, which shall be true at last, and shall

16 *The Reformed Monastery, Or,*
remain unchangeable to eternity!

If it be so, that indeed thou must die, and one of those two states must be thy portion for ever; then put on now those affections, which thou shalt certainly entertain when thou shalt be near to expire; look upon things now, as thou shalt at last, and it will make thee wise; and make thee see the Truth naked; *For that is certainly true which is true at last: and all other appearances are but varnish and illusion.*

Dwell seriously upon this consideration, and it will make thee clearly see, that true wisdom is to love and fear God: and the greatest happiness, to live under his protection; to be in his favour, *whose loving kindness is better than life.*

That one consideration well weighed, will make thee understand, that there is no great worth or pleasure in those lusts and vanities thou didst renounce, when thou becamest a Christian; that thy vow was onely the renouncing of thy greatest misery. 'Twill make thee understand, that it was no great hardship thou didst undertake, when thou promisedst to serve God, and be a Souldier of *JESUS* under the Banner of the Cross; That 'twas only the obliging thy self to be truly happy, and to enjoy perfect Freedom.

And now my soul, considering that of necessity thou must either by sin serve the
Devil,

Devil, and destroy thy self: or by vertue and piety serve God, and gain eternal blifs; what shouldst thou do, but intirely devote thy self to thy Blessed, thy best Master? Breathing out heavenward such Ejaculations as these,

My dearest Lord, I was once brought and presented to thee, when through the waters of Baptism I past into thy Family and became thy Servant. Lord, I do here repeat the same oblation, and now again yield my self to be thine. Here I do from my heart disown and bewail all those acts of mine, whereby at any time I have disowned or displeased thee; could the shedding of my blood recal or expiate them, I could freely pour it out and die.

Wherein soever I have behaved my self as if I were not thine, I here, what I can retract it with regret and sorrow. Lord, pity my weakness and pardon my folly, and let me be received again into the number of thy Servants. I am ready to do or suffer any thing thou shalt please, so I may still belong to thee. O let our first contract, my Baptismal ingagement stand, notwithstanding my breach of it. I resolve now to mind and observe it better; assist me sweet JESU, and let me ever live to thee.

Lord, now I as heartily yield up my self to thee, that I may love and obey thee:

18 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

as I shall when I die, that thou maist save me. I had rather serve thee than be the greatest Prince on earth. I had rather obey thee, than command all mankind. I prefer thy favour to all the riches of this world. I had rather suffer, and even die for thee, than without thee to have all the pleasures and the joys of this life. Lord, I will love, and serve thee for ever.

CHAP. VI.

That Christ having bought us, hath now a just title to our love and service.

LOVE regards not so much what is commanded, as who it is that commands it ; if it be the Beloved requires any thing, love doth it chearfully without reluctancy ; another with earnest begging should not have that granted, which the least word of a friend shall obtain. The commands of Christianity are easie and most rational, in keeping of them consisteth our present and future happiness : Yet the true lover of *JESUS* looks farther, he confidess that it is his Lord and Saviour who would have him obey ; he to whom he belongs, to whom he owes him-

self and infinitely more : for every Christian owes JESUS to JESUS, who gave himself for him. The old saying was *emendus cui imperes*, buy your slaves ; buy those that will be commanded by you ; none of us can say so to the God whom we serve, for he hath indeed bought us ; *Ye are not your own* (saith S. Paul) *ye are bought with a price*, thence it is strongly infer'd, therefore glorifie God in your body and in your spirit which are Gods. We are not at our own dispose, our Divine Master hath a most just propriety in us ; we are wholly his : and would to God, we were his as much by affection and resignation, as by right : the price he hath paid for us, is no less than himself ; he hath given his life that ours might be his ; *we were redeemed from our vain conversation by the precious blood of Christ*, who died for us, that we might live to him. He could get nothing by that dear purchase, but our love only, for we were his before, it is he that made us : only we had estranged our selves from him, and placed our love on other things, and he could not count us his own while we loved him not.

CHAP. VII.

*How much we are ingaged to serve our
Blessed Lord, with renewed promises
to do it faithfully.*

I Must therefore consider whose I am ;
I am Christs by a strong and incontestable
title ; while I serve him I do that proper
work which belongs to me ; whilst I
obey what he hath commanded, I do what
is infinitely my duty, what his love to me
challengeth, and what my love to him de-
sires to return. Had I ten thousand years
to live, and could I serve him all that while
and do nothing else, I could not repay him
for the least part of that great ransom he
hath paid for me, neither could I deserve
any thing of those great wages which he
will give me : but my life is but short and
he allows me time for other things, even
for pleasure and recreation. I have there-
fore a most gracious Master, and therefore
I resolve and promise to do what he re-
quires of me ; I will except at nothing he
commands, it shall be my joy to pay my
duty to him ; I will make it appear that I
serve out of love and affection. O my dear-
est

est JESUS, would my heart did feel what it should; would I could express what it feels; and would I could perform as much as I express: But O my Blessed Lord, how frequently and unhappily do I forget that thou art my Master, and I thy servant; that my chiefest business is to do thy will; and that my greatest happiness as well as duty is to obey thee? Is it not because I also forget that thou didst redeem me from a most wretched slavery? that thou didst pay an immense price for me; that thou becamest a servant for me, before thou requiredst any service from me; and that thou didst first love me before thou didst intreat my love? O thou great Lover and Saviour of men, I wholly give my self to thee body and soul, heart and affections; I desire to be thine; I pray that thou wouldst make me to be thine, and that thou wouldest own me for thine, that so thou maist be mine to eternity.

Wouldest thou know

(saith S. Aug.) what

thou must give for hea-

ven? give thy self, that

is the price; nothing

less will serve, that a-

lone is accounted sufficient:

heaven is worth

just what thou art, give thy self and thou shalt

certainly have it.

*Qui viget affectu, non
gemit imperio.*

*Aliud non querit pre-
cium nisi te ipsum; tan-
tum valet quantum es,
te da & habebis illud.*
Manual.

Do

22 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

Do not men seek to serve and oblige great persons expecting to be by them gratified? are they not ambitious to wait upon Princes in regard of an honourable stipend? and why should I not count it the greatest Honour and preferment to serve the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; the salary he pays his servants is infinitely greater than any the greatest Monarch can give; they oftentimes cast off with disgrace their most faithful officers: my Lord is so far from so doing, that he bears with the faults of his meanest servants, and never turns out any that will live with him. 'Tis highly difficult to become a Prince his favorite, many spend their time, their wealth and themselves, and never can get the least share in his affections; but I am sure my heavenly Master loveth me; I know it by what he hath done, by what he daily doth, and by what he hath declared he would do for me: Although he hath bought me, and so might well require the utmost I can do, without any reward: yet he hires me and gives me more, infinitely more than I can earn or claim. I will therefore be diligent, faithful and zealous in fulfilling the work he hath appointed me. I will often say to my self; *I am a servant and a lover of JESUS; a servant and a lover of the Blessed JESUS.* I will every morning consider; what can I do this day of
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what my Lord hath commanded me ?
 what duties of sobriety, righteousness or god-
 liness can I discharge to make it appear that
 J E S U S is the Master I own and obey ?
 None of us liveth to himself, and no man dies
 to himself, for whether we live we live unto
 the Lord, or whether we die we die unto the
 Lord : whether we live therefore or die, we
 are the Lords ; for to this end Christ both died,
 and rose and revived, that he might be Lord
 both of the dead and living.

CHAP. IX.

*Meditation to excite us to a sincere and
 fervent love.*

O MY Soul, whither canst thou fly,
 for to be secure and at rest ? thou
 dost converse with snares and temptations ;
 thou art taken up with cares and concerns
 that come to nothing ! whither canst thou
 retire, to be free from dangers ? what
 place of leisure canst thou find, wherein
 thou maist secure thy duty and thy happi-
 nefs ?

The Love of J E S U S must be thy
 refuge ; thy *claustrum Animæ*, a Cloister or
 shelter for thee to dwell in, and be safe.
 Thither

24 The Reformed Monastery; Or,

Thither retire under the banner of love, Cant. 2. 4. and there thou shalt want neither protection nor encouragement. Yet thou love the Lord, hate evil; he preserveth the Souls of his Saints: he delivers them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the Righteous: and gladness for the upright is heart, Psal. 97. 10.

Consider what love hath done for thee: and thou shalt easily believe that it can do much upon thee.

Omne agens & omne amans vult sibi passum & amatum assimilare.

Love like active fire, turns all things into its likeness. It vested the most perfect God, with thy flesh and infirmities. Because resemblance begets love, God would become like thee, that

thou mightest love him. And if thou wilt entertain and follow the Love of J E S U S, it will make thee become like him; if thou wilt walk in love as he walked, Eph. 5. 2. it will make thee easily follow his footsteps,

Ὁρᾶτε ἀγαπῶντες, πῶς μέγα καὶ θαυμα-
σὸν ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, καὶ
τὴ τελειότης αὐτῆς
ἐκ ἑστὶν ἱξήγησις.
Clem. Rom.

and arrive to his perfect happiness. Behold how great, how wonderful a thing is Love. Its power and perfection can not be uttered; we want words for to express them.

The Love of JESUS. 25

In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him, 1 John 4. 9. He made this with a word, but to save thee, he wrought many wonders, and suffered many pains.

*Quia totum & semel
dicendo fecit, in refici-
endo & dixit multa &
perulit dura. Bern.*

The Jews, when they saw him weep for dead Lazarus; behold, said they, how he loved him! when thou seest him shed, not only tears, but his blood also, dying that thou mightest live: wilt thou not say, behold how he loved me! and then my soul, what canst thou do, but return love for love! It is easie, and it is profitable, and it affords the greatest of pleasures, to love him who thus loved thee.

If by a hearty sincere love, thou canst dwell in the bosom, and approach the heart of thy dearest Lord, there thou shalt find the sweetest rest, the purest joy, the best of instructions, and the greatest helps and encouragements, to perfect holiness, till thy happiness be perfect. If with an unfeigned affection thou canst daily repeat these few words, which have been frequently in the mouth of some devout persons, *I love thee dear JESUS, I love thee dear JESUS!* thou hast learned that which will teach thee both to live and die well.

26 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

well. Then thou wilt value nothing, nor life it self : but so far as it is subservient to love ; and thou shalt be so far from being

Οἶα ζήμιμα ,
μὴ δύναμεν ὁ ἱεὺς
Χεῖρ πολλὰκις ἀ-
ποθανεῖν. God. in
S. Basil.

afraid of death, that thou shalt wish with a primitive Saint, it were in thy power to die many times for
J E S U S.

A devout love for him, will make thee find that true peace and satisfaction, which the world with endless labour vainly seeks in earthly enjoyments .It will make thee say (but without fear of change or disappointment) with the rich man in the Gospel ; *Soul eat and drink, be merry, take thine ease, thou hast much goods laid up for many years,* Luk. 12. yea for eternity.

Worldly men, as though they had a drop sic, the more they drink out of their broken Cisterns, the more they thirst, the more unsatisfied they remain : but they that love and fear God, lack nothing ; they drink living waters out of that fountain, which is never drie ; they have him in their souls, with whom true peace and felicity is ever enjoyed. *O fortunatissimè, cui quod amas, domi est !* O happy soul, that art possessor of that which thou lovest ! thou hast enough at home to make thee intirely happy, without ever seeking abroad.

O my soul entertain that blessed guest, which instead of being chargeable, will discharge thee of all thy wants and fears, and troublesome burthens. Love will strengthen thee against temptations, and secure thee from sin. It will deliver thee from the terrors and bondage of the Law, and bring thee to the rest, and freedom of the Gospel-yoke. As it self grows on towards perfection, So will it still increase thy hapiness till its consummation.

*Tolerant leges delicta
punire conscientiam mu-
nire non poterant. Last.*

*Brevis differentia inter
legem, & Evangelium,
timor & amor. Aug.*

But my Soul, suffer not thy love to be fantastick, and to spend it self in thoughts and wishes; the expressions of love are obedience and submission, with a devout life. *who so keepeth his word, in him is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him,* 1 John 2. 5.

Princes have many flatterers, and but a few friends: J E S U S also hath many pretenders and but a few lovers. Multitudes will wait upon him, in Mount Gerizim, to receive his blessing; in Sinai where he gives his Law, he hath but a few attendants; and fewer yet in Golgotha, where he himself suffers, and calls us to take up his Cross. Therefore my Soul, by obedience, self-denial, and an humble patience, justify

28 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

justify the sincerity of thy love and prove God's testations. Follow now thy Saviour by love, wouldst thou have a sincere imitation, and thou shalt certainly come to see his face, and to dwell with him in glory, for where he is, there shall his servant be, John 12. 26. They that be faithful in love shall abide with him, Mat. 22. Wisd. 3. 9.

CHAP. IX.

Christianity absolutely requires our love and strictest obedience.

THIS double duty of dying unto sin and living unto righteousness, abstaining from that which is evil and doing that which is good, I am obliged to perform by strong and indispensable obligations : If I do not, I certainly perish. When we say, in common speaking, that we do things out of love, we mean that we are free, and may chuse whether we do them or no, we are not bound to it : but here all along where I undertake to discharge the duties of Religion out of love ; I do not in the least mean so. I acknowledge my self under the greatest necessity of discharging my Baptismal Vow, of living according to the

d probe the Gospel Rule, otherwise my neglect of
 by long would be my ruine, I should perish in
 it cemy disobedience. Love it self is a duty,
 dwells the first and greatest commandment: thou shalt
 , the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and
 ry the with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,
 him Mat. 22. 37. I recommend love therefore

is the noblest, the
 most powerful mo-
 tive to a religious
 obedience; as that

*Meliores quos dirigit
 amor, plures quos corrigit
 timor. Aug.*

which makes our duty easie and pleasant,
 and gives a value to what we do or suffer
 for God. I know there is those who teach
 that, by our well doing we must not seek
 for salvation, and that our obedience is
 not required to our justification, but may
 be a mark or an effect of it, faith having
 done the work before; but this groundless
 and mischievous opinion is contradicted
 by thousands of plain expresse Scriptures;
 He that heareth these sayings of mine and doth
 them not, is like the man that built his house
 upon the sand. Not every one that saith unto
 me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of
 heaven: but he that doth the will of my father
 which is in heaven. If thou wilt enter life,
 keep the Commandments: and innumerable
 others, with all those that affirm, that God
 shall judge and reward every man accord-
 ing as his works have been.

No, the holy Religion we profess re-
 quires

31 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

quires a conformity betwixt the Holy *JESUS* and his followers; that by a devout imitation we should copy his example: that we should be fruitful in good works, and by a sincere and universal obedience serve God all the days of our life; For if the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a full recompence of reward: how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation, Heb. 2. 2, 3. by being disobedient to our Lord *JESUS*, who having wrought and revealed it, offers it to us, on the condition of an affectionate obedience to his Gospel? The earth which drinketh the rain that cometh upon it — and beareth thorns and briers; is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burnt; such is their condition who receiving the heavenly dew of Divine Grace, in their admission into, and profession of Christianity, yet still remain barren, or bring forth evil fruit: But beloved (saith the Apostle) we are perswaded, better things of you, and things that accompany salvation: for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have shewed towards his name; and we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end, Heb. 6. 7, &c. He says not, we desire that you may be confident and perswaded of your salvation, but that, by love and diligent obedience, ye may ascertain your hope,

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The Love of J E S U S. 30

make your calling and election sure, as S. Peter speaks, 1 Pet. 1. 10. for indeed, God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with him, 1 Thes. 5. 9. 10. in holiness of life, worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, Ephes. 4. 1. for we are Gods workmanship created in Jesus Christ unto good works, which God hath ordained that we should walk in them, Ephes. 2. 10. This then is the way wherein of necessity we must walk, that as we ingaged and promised when we were baptized into Christ, so we should live ever after: which S. Paul expresseth thus, As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, Col. 2. 6. and again, walk worthy of the Lord, being fruitful in every good work, Col. 1. 10. This is the rule whereby we must order the course of our lives, that our conversation be as becomes the Gospel of Christ; that our conversation be in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Phil. 1. 27. and 3. 20. that whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, any vertus, any thing praiseworthy, Phil. 4:8. may be our constant study and practice. We must labour that whether present or absent we may be accepted of our Lord, because we shall all appear before him and receive according as we obey him, now in his absence. 1 Cor. 5. 9.

C H A P.

CHAP. X.

Considerations to encourage us in the discharge of our Christian duty; with a caution to the Reader.

ALL this, and much more to the same purpose, which I have read and observed in the Sacred Books of the new Testament, hath convinced me that it is the design of Christian Religion to make me meek and humble, sober and contented, just and charitable, devout and religious, vertuous and holy : this I own to be my duty, and I will endeavour my self heartily to perform the same. And that I may do it with cheerfulness and affection, I will stir and quicken the holy fire of love in my heart, by pious considerations. When any duty to God or man calls upon me for action and performance, and I find in my soul too much of dulness or reluctancy, I will again by meditation suppose my dying Saviour present, telling me, how much he hath done and suffered for me, and desiring me, as I love him, to do that duty which lies before me. " Christian, if
" thou dost understand the greatness of my
love

“love which brought me here to die for
“thee ; if thou art sensible of it, and
“wouldst make any return for it, do this,
“obey this command ; this may be the
“last thing thou shalt ever do for me, this
“may be the last tryal of thy love : sure it
“would grieve thee to have denied this
“small request to him that gives his life,
“that gives himself for thee. Or else I will
suppose my self in the presence of my Di-
vine Master sitting on his heavenly Throne
with his glorified servants about him, shew-
ing me the crown he hath assigned to me,
and saying ; “ N.N. wilt thou deny to do this
“at my earnest request ? wilt thou be so un-
“kind to me ? Sure I have deserved better
“at thy hands ; sure I, who am much a-
“bove thee, have done much more for
“thee, than that comes to ; but besides,
“I would highly recompence thee. These
“my friends I have rewarded with the
“bliss and glory they enjoy, for having
“done such things for me : and I would
“reward thee as bountifully : here is eter-
“nal life, eternal rest, eternal glory for
“thy recompence : as thou lovest me, as
“thou lovest thy self, obey, that thou maist
“be happy. To this, what answer could
I make, but such as this ? Lord not only
this, but any thing else thou hast command-
ed, I am willing to fulfil and obey. I be-
wail my dulness and depraved nature that
I makes

34 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

makes me so unready, so unactive in thy service : but Lord thou knowest that I love thee. I would undertake any labour, any trouble to make it appear ; I would die to justifie it. Yet, sweetest *JESU*, I beg of thee to increase my love ; to increase it to such a degree that, like thy heavenly attendants, I may burn with that Divine fire, and be all love to thee : that so I may be always prepared and desirous to do thy will. *Stir up, we beseech thee,*

Sund. 25. O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people, that they plenteously bring forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Christian, I would here advise thee, before I pass further. That thou wouldst not judge of several things in this Book, by thy present liking of them. Devotional things are discerned more by the affections than by the judgment ; the relish of them doth depend upon the temper of the Soul. And so those resolves and meditations which now, it may be, please thee not, may hereafter be very acceptable, when thou art otherwise disposed ; to be sure when thou art ready to leave the world, and enter thy portion of Eternity. If now therefore thou wilt bring thy mind to such a frame as then it will be in, I need not fear but that what I have writ, thou wilt also

read

The Love of J E S U S. 35

read and repeat heartily in the first Person: for to that end I have thus contrived it to engage thine affections, to make thee speak, as of thy self, these soliloquies, acts of love, and acts of resolution which run throughout the whole discourse. It may affect thee much, and to good purpose, frequently to confer with thy Soul and with thy Saviour, about thy duty and thy happiness. However be sure thou beest serious and sincere. For certain it is, that for thee N. N. by name, *J E S U S* was crucified and died, and certain it is, that thou thy self shalt die and be judged, and rise again to an intolerable eternity, if by carelessness and inconsideration thou hast been unmindful of thy Lord and thy soul: or else rise again to eternal joys, if thou hast sincerely loved and served *J E S U S*. *If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Fathers Commandments, and abide in his love, John 15. 10.*

CHAP. XI.

That Love will prompt us to free-will offerings, and things it never doth enough.

THUS much of necessity must be done; my duty as well as my love constrains me to it. Not to break negative precepts and to obey positive ones, (that is, to cease from sin and to work righteousness,) is required of me; if I do it by love, I have made my task pleasant: but yet a task it is, which must be fulfilled. Not but that there is mercy for sins against the New-covenant, for the transgression of Gospel precepts; there is joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner, whatever his sins have been; and it ought greatly to induce dear God to us, that he is so willing to forgive, so desirous to have us repent, that we may be capable of his pardon: but whether soon or late, whether after crying guilty or ordinary sins, still I say, there must be a true contrition, a sorrow and repentance for our sins, proceeding from the love of God, and a sincere endeavour to please and obey him for the future; and so

thus

thus far we are drawn by a moral necessity, by the desire of our own happiness, which is not to be obtained any other way. But shall we stay just here, and not go one step further than is required? 'tis well indeed when we are safe, and that must be secured first of all, and with the greatest care; but shall our love proceed no further? Sure that Christian who is best assured of his salvation, will love God most of all, and make to him the greatest and most hearty returns. When a man is qualified for heaven and enjoys the greatest happiness this world is capable of; that is, a sense of Gods favour and a well grounded assurance of a future bliss, his soul cannot but melt into the most affectionate love for that gracious God, whose mercy and loving-kindness hath brought him into that happy condition, and fitted him by his grace for a much happier; they, I say, that are in such a case (for they only can be capable of what I now treat of) may well do something more, than what needs they must; may well enlarge their affections to God, beyond the bounds of prescribed duties. It is a good sign, a sign of a sincere and a pious heart, when a man is forward to undertake for God: when he doth not weigh grains and scruples, lest he should part with any of his right and liberty: but affords God a full measure and running over, and

38 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

thinks he never gives enough, and still desires that he might do infinitely more for him. 'Tis true that properly speaking, all is due to God : and the more any, the best Christian returns, the more he hath received, and so the more he is indebted ; but yet, God is pleased not to require all that he gives, nor all that we may give, that we may have wherewith to make a free-will-offering ; that we may have something to give him, that he requires not, tokens of our greater love and gratitude. It was foretold that under the Gospel *in the day of Christs power, his people should offer him free-will-offerings with an holy worship.* Psal. 110. 3. And David himself, under the Law, was at his *quid retribuam, what shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me ?* Psal. 116. Though the benefits which God vouchsafed his people then, were much inferiour to them he hath since bestowed upon us ; (*for eye had not then seen, nor ear heard, neither was it entred into the heart of man, what great things God would do for them that love him, as he hath now declared in the revelations of his Gospel,*) though he had tied them to a burthensome and most expensive service : yet he accepted their voluntary vows and engagements, and was well pleased with them : yet he would receive their free-will-offerings, and delight in them. And

sure

sure we are more obliged than the Jews to let our love and gratitude break forth beyond the limits of commands and express injunctions : and now that God hath opened to us his rarest treasures, his own bosome, for to give us his beloved Son, he will not reject our free oblations, the voluntary acknowledgments of his undeserved and unspeakable mercies. 'Tis not to be denied (without giving the lie to the learning and piety of the best Christians in all ages) but that there is in the New Testament counsels as well as precepts, some things recommended, though not commanded. He that sells all that he hath for to buy the *pearl of great price*, and they that make themselves *Eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven*, were not enjoined so to do, but are well approved of : and that God who gives a plentiful harvest to him that sows bountifully, 2 Cor. 9. 6. is doubtless well pleased with his open handedness and charitable profusion. And as it is the best indication of a devout and loving soul, cheerfully to exceed what is strictly required : it is also the best fence to immure and secure our duty ; for then when we slack and abate, we may be still within our due bounds. Nay more, I am confident that as it is best and safest, it is also easier, to give free will offerings, than only, just to pay the daily commanded sacrifice,

40 *The Reformed Monastery, Or,*

because those proceed from affection, these perhaps only from injunction. A friend desired to go one mile, goes two or ten, and finds his way pleasant, because love leads him : but he that is prest to the same journey, and is acted by fear and compulsion, while he resolves not to go one foot farther than needs he must, will easily be tempted to stay one short of what he should.

But this is better understood by the devout lovers *J E S U S* than I can express

Οὐ μόνον τὰς ἐν-
πολὰς ἐφύλαξαν ἀλ-
λὰ καὶ δῶρα προσή-
νευον τῷ Θεῷ.

Beat. Doroth. Doct. 1.

it. " Precepts are
" given to all men as
" tributes are exact-
" ed of all : (saith an
" Ancient guide of
" souls) but as in the
" world, great per-

" sons and favourites not only pay the tax,
" but also offer presents and gifts to the
" Prince : so in the Church, the most Re-
" ligious observe not only the precepts,
" but also intimations and counsels, and
" give to God, not only what he exacts,
" but also free oblations, all that they are
" able. How many thousands of Saints,
now in heaven, have taken this course?
how many that now wear the bright crown
of virginity, might have enjoied the com-
forts of marriage, had not the love of
J E S U S prevailed over their natural
desires?

desires? how many who might have possessed great estates, enjoy now the greater treasures of eternity, for having made themselves poor, to relieve the needy members of JESUS? how many who now sit on thrones of glory, have chosen here to follow JESUS in meanness and humility, when honours and worldly pomps were at their command? how many are now rewarded with high degrees of everlasting bliss, for having devoted their whole time upon earth to the service of the Blessed JESUS; when they might have spent more of it upon their profit or pleasure? and how many now living, aspire to the same felicities and recompences, by cheerfully following the same ways, and expressing a sincere and unbounded love, by such free oblations?

Cur non possum quod isti & istæ? S. Aug. Why cannot I do what these my Christian Brothers and Sisters have done, and do still? hath not God done as great things for me as for them? hath he not given me the same promises as they had? do not I hope to be their companion and fellow citizen in heaven? And why then cannot I love as much as they did? I should therefore, and do resolve to make no reservations; JESUS shall have the command of all he hath given me, of all he hath enabled me to do; I shall keep nothing from him which

42 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
may express my love and gratitude, and do
him service.

Dearest *J E S U S*, I know I can never
do for thee so much as I should, and I
know that I shall never do so much as I
would; thou gavest thy self for me, and
thou wilt give thy self to me: and Lord,
what am I worth, and what is the worth
of all I can do? It is a great favour that
thou wilt accept of me and my weak en-
deavours. I know that if heaven were ca-
pable of any grief, it would be only that
we have not loved thee enough upon earth;
when thou fillest our souls with thy divine
ravishing joys, we shall wish we had done
nothing here, but serve and love thee. O
give me grace now whilst I live, to do
what I shall wish to have done when I
die; let me do now I am absent from
thee, what I shall wish to have done when

Modus amandi Deum I dwell with thee;
sine modo. S. Bern. let me love thee in-
finitely and without
measure. *An offering*

of a free heart will I give thee, and praise thy
name, O Lord, because it is so comfortable,
Esal. 54. 6.

CHAP. XII.

*That our obedience to the Church, is
an excellent expression of our love to
Christ.*

TH E first instance of our love in this way of free-will offerings should be a pious obedience to our Mother the Church; not but that it is many ways required, but because 'tis almost wholly neglected. What by pride and refractoriness, what by ignorance and indevotion, and what by looseness and irreligion, that obedience which ought to be paid to *those that have the rule over us in the Lord*, to the standing rules and orders of our Spiritual Governours, is so generally laid aside, that many that would, yet dare not press it upon the people; and that, even they that obey do it secretly, and, as, though 'twere dishonourable, are in a manner ashamed to own it; Hence comes that great neglect of Confirmation, that most necessary and ancient, if not Apostolick constitution; hence the desuetude of fasting upon appointed days, and even of bidding of them: and the non-observance of Holy days, and times of solemn devotion; hence

44 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

hence the slight regard had to the publick worship of God, and the seldom receiving of the Lords Supper ; hence the reservedness and unhappy secrecy or most people in not acquainting their spiritual guides with the state of their conscience when it needs, and not receiving their comforts and directions ; hence the not sending for the Elders of the Church to do their office upon sick persons, and the seldom desiring their absolution ; and hence even in too many of the Clergy, the neglect of daily saying Divine Offices, as they are commanded, and observing other injunctions peculiar to them. I may say that it fares with our Church as with some Princes, who have their due sovereignty denied them because they are Christians : (as if by becoming members and defenders of the Church, they were become subject to Pontifical Chairs and Puritan Synods) for so, many would not have this Church obeyed because 'tis Reformed ; they would not have its laws observed, because it makes them inferior to Gods ; as though, by not imposing a blind superstitious and over severe obedience, as *Rome* doth, this Church were become incapable of exercising any authority over her children and requiring any duty from them. But I say, let those that love *J E S U S* amend this, for his sake : for the Church is his spouse and hath received

received her power from him; let them yield a free and religious obedience to Ecclesiastical injunctions, for his sake who hath said, *he that receiveth you receiveth me.* It is doubtless our duty so to do: and I am sure it will be a good token of a pious heart, when we shall obey them in the Lord, whom the Lord hath set over us. We shall make it appear that we own the Authority of our heavenly King, when we are subject to those his officers, by whom he now reigns over us: to whom he hath given the keys of his kingdom, and whom he hath appointed Stewards of his saving Mysteries: we shall have a right, and a share in the Mystrious representation of of the great expiatory sacrifice, which by the Church is celebrated in the Eucharist, and in those Divine Services and solemn Prayers which the Church offers to God daily: and we shall receive the full benefit of being members of the Church and holding communion with it. If this were not absolutely required, yet I am sure it will be a very acceptable free-will offering, if we do it devoutly and joyfully, because we love *JESUS*; and this Christian obedience to the known, rational, and pious orders of the Church, will answer the best part of that ancient and so much magnified self-abnegation, vowed by the Cœnobites, when they gave up themselves to be in all things

46 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
things ruled and commanded by their superiors : and it will exercise those two heavenly graces, meekness and humility, which the world despiseth, but all true Christians own to be most Divine : as they that bring rest to the soul, Mat. 11. 29. and make us most conformable to the meek and humble *J E S U S*. Solomon knew the true mother by her love to the child : and the true child of God, may be known by his love and duty to his Mother the Church.

CHAP. XIII.

Of several voluntary Oblations.

AS for corporal austerities commanded or uncommanded, I have said something of them already : and the chiefest use and design of them is to mortifie sensual lusts, and to keep under the body that the spirit may rule and be obeyed ; yet, as they are exercises of repentance, marks of the just indignation we conceive against our selves for having displeased God ; as they may effect or express a disrelish of temporal pleasures, a longing for heavenly joys, and an endeavour to take up our cross and follow *J E S U S* ; they may
be

be the matter of a free-will offering, and they may find a gracious reward and acceptance insomuch as they proceed from a sincere love to *J E S U S*. Prayer also, thanksgiving, reading, meditation, acts of Religion; though, as to the substance, they be the discharge of the greatest duty God requires of us, the worship and adoration of his Divine Majesty: yet as to the quantity, they may become free oblations, the expressions of a greater love. He that with devout affections enlargeth his offices, or counts the frequency of them by Canonical hours and wisht for opportunities: and he that sets apart large portions for religious exercises, or in the following of his necessary business, doth often lift up his heart and thoughts to heaven and heavenly things, makes a voluntary offering of some of his time, to him of whose eternity he hopes to be partaker. He that defalks some hours from the refreshment of his body, to bestow them upon his soul; he that chuseth a meaner condition and employment, that having fewer avocations he may spend more time upon Religion; and he that bears with some wrongs and injuries, that being free from the distractions of quarrels and law suits, he may be the better disposed to serve God, hath bought the blessed opportunity of attending *J E S U S* and indearing himself to him.

48 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

him. Charity likewise, whether Spiritual or Corporal, whether in giving or in forgiving may be carried further than is absolutely required, and so become a free oblation. He that takes great pains to instruct the ignorant, to convert sinners, by all means to win souls to *JESUS*, may manifest a greater love than was absolutely necessary to his own salvation ; and he that makes it his business and delight to prevent quarrels or make reconciliations ; to comfort and defend the afflicted and oppressed, to visit hospitals and relieve the poor ; and to spend all his substance in pious uses, for the honour of God, and Religion, and for the present and future happiness of men, may exceed what God would have rewarded, and by shewing so great a love enrich his crown of glory and recompence. I only mark the head-springs or store-houses of those arbitrary gifts wherewith men may honour God and enrich themselves : the several emanations and offerings which may proceed from them, being free and innumerable, cannot be specified, and should not be imposed. Where there is love there is a willing mind : and 2 Cor. 8. 12. *where there is a willing mind a man* (in other cases as well as in charity) *is accepted, according to what he hath, and not according to what*

by hath not. " Some husbandmen sow
 " that they may have
 " wherewith to pay Εἰδὼν ὅτι κατὰ
 " their debts, (which τοῖς ἐν ἀντίμα παρ'
 " marks the labours ἀπορίῃς, &c.
 " and offerings of S Johan. Clim. Grad.
 " penitents, who en- 26. S. 43.
 " deavour to make
 " what satisfaction they can for their inju-
 " ries to God or man.) Some sow that
 " by the expected crop they may increase
 " their wealth ; (which represents the good
 " works of more innocent persons, who
 " aspire to a great reward and a glorious
 " crown.) Some sow that they may have
 " something wherewith to express their
 " gratitude, and make presents to their
 " kind land-lord or benefactor ; (whereby
 " is signified the best of Christians, who in
 " all things seek and design the glory of
 " their Lord.) And others sow that they
 " may be thought diligent, and receive
 " commendations from the passers by ;
 " (these are an emblem of the most im-
 " perfect Christians, who in Gods service
 " seek their own glory, and of whom our
 " Blessed Saviour says that they have their
 " reward.) However all must sow ; and
 " every one as he doth it, sparingly or
 " bountifully, so shall he reap at last. But
 " heaven is a cheap purchase, give we never
 " so dear for it. " The Gospel reveals and
 " offers

50 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

Decay of Christian Piety. “ offers a glorious kingdom, great
“ and eternal felicities : but he
“ that expects their possession
“ because he reads and believes
“ them, is like him that should
“ fanſie the whole world ſhall be his, becauſe
“ he hath the Hiſtory or the Map thereof

CHAP. XIV.

*The true notion of Free-will Offerings
vindicated, with an Exhortation to
abound in the work of the Lord.*

HERE it may be proper, to insert the
caution of an ancient Rule. Be ſure

*Cupiens divinum ad-
implere conſilium, ante
omnia ſerua mandatum.
Athan.*

“ thou firſt obſerve
“ that which is com-
“ manded, before
“ thou doſt aim at
“ Counſels. Neglect

not a duty becauſe thou doſt offer freely, and
art over-zealous in other things. Thus the
covetous worldling gripes and niggardly
detains, becauſe he deſigns to build alms-
houſes at laſt : and thus the factious zealot
breaks the ſecond, with the firſt Table of
the Divine Law ; making Religion an ex-
cuſe for his uncharitableneſs and diſobedi-
ence.

ence. But if we love *JESUS* with hearty affection, we shall be far enough from thus mocking God; and deceiving our selves; for love that doubles upon us all obligations of duty, doth also oblige us to these free-will offerings. They are not amends for our omissions. or exchanges in lieu of our obedience: but they are the fulfilling of that law of Gratitude we now live under. The infinite mercies of the Gospel, put upon us infinite obligations to do in requital, for God, all that possibly we are able. But the Gospel is a Law of liberty, all its extent and measures are not in all particulars, minutely and expressly defined.

So then by these free-will offerings, we must not understand any thing like supererogations; or things to which we are no ways obliged: or that exceed what God hath done for us, or what he will reward: or that are done without his help, *without whom we can do nothing*; any of these notions is impious, and implies a contradiction. But by them is to be understood, the expression of our acknowledgments, and of that love we owe infinitely, in things not expressly commanded, and not under necessity. *Of such* (saith the Apostle) *I speak not by commandment, but by occasion, and to prove the sincerity of your love,* 2 Cor. 8. 8. They that like the *Macedonians* have first given themselves to the Lord, may well with

22 The Reformed Monastery; Or,

with them be willing to offer to God, to their power, and beyond their power. To this purpose S. Paul saith of himself, that his preaching the Gospel of Christ, was altogether his duty, and wo unto him if he fulfilled it not: but his doing it willingly for nothing, in the Regions of Achaia; for that he had a reward, and that was his boasting and his glorying, of which no man should rob him. To this purpose also, the ancient Fathers have said many things. That some good works we do *verius virtutis amore, liberaque electione, quam ulla omnino legis coactione*, rather by a free choice and love,

Ἄ μὴ γὰρ ὑπερ
ἐντολῶν ζήντες
πολὺν ἔχει ἢ μισθόν
ἔτι ἔστω. Chrys.

*In licitis cavere iugum
necessitatis est, permixta
vincere munus arbitrii.*

than by precept. That thus to do things for God beyond express commandments was highly acceptable and highly rewarded. That to abstain from that which is evil, is absolutely required: and farther to deny our selves for Religions sake, is a free oblation. And much more to the same purpose is frequently to be met with, in those true and devout lovers of the Blessed JE-
SUS, whose affection and gratitude to him, nothing could fully express or confine.

And now by these, and first by holy
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Scripture, it manifestly appears, that the true notion of Free-will offerings, in nothing favours humane pride, or derogates from Gods Glory. Can the Beggar merit or presume anythng, if he throws away the dirt in his hand, for to receive Gold ? and if with *David*, we pour out to God, that water we thirsted and might lawfully have drunk, that we may more largely drink the water of life, which God freely gives us, shall we therefore exalt our selves?

Let us then endeavour, by all means to make it appear that we are sensible how infinitely we are obliged to love and serve *JESUS*. Let us not, as the *Son of Sirach* adviseth, *consult with a coward in matters of war* ; consult with an irreligious age, in matters of Piety and Religion : and let us not think it enough to do as the most do. When first the Christian Faith was preached in the world, and men understood what Christ had done for them, and what he had promised, they thought nothing too much, nor too good for him. They cheerfully parted with temporal pleasures, honours, and riches ; with their liberties, their limbs, their blood, their very lives, that they might be faithful to *JESUS*, and come to reign with him. They made it appear by their patient, cheerful, and magnanimous sufferings, that they valued
nothing

54 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

nothing but *J E S U S* and Eternity. We are not now exposed to the same dangers for the profession and belief of Christianity: but we may make our love and zeal appear, by our contempt of the world and aspiring after heaven; by our charity to men, and abounding in the work of the Lord; by keeping the Commandments, as well as dying for the Creed; the same Lord and Saviour that requires our Faith to the one, demands our obedience to the other. And now, if we spend our time in the hearty observance of our Lords Precepts and intimations, in doing and enlarging our duty to the utmost of our power; if we thus *confess him before men* by living to him: then are we prepared to die for him, and he will certainly own us as much as if we had. Our Crown now this way, may be enriched, and our love shewn and perfected, as well as by the flames of Martyrdom. And O happy we! that we can come, and more happy yet if we do come, to sing Allelujah, and eternally praise our gracious Redeemer with the noble Army of Martyrs; where the love we had here

*Ubi tota virtus erit,
O anima videre quod a-
mas, & summa felicitas
amare quod vedes. Aug.*

shall fill our hearts with divine joy, and be increased to the proportions of our endless and unspeakable Bliss. *The Lord direct our hearts into*

the

the love of God, and into the patient waiting
for JESUS our Master, 2 Thes. 3. 3.

I need not here insert cautions against
vain glory and self complacency after we
have done the most we are able : for if it
proceeds not from the love of God, it is
nothing worth ; and if it doth, it will never
bring pride nor vanity. *Charity vaunteth
not it self, and is not puffed up,* 1 Cor. 13. 4.
Only in the words of a pious Saint, " If

" we had died a

" thousand times for

" JESUS, yet we

" should not have re-

" paid him the least

" part of what we

" owe his infinite

" mercy and condescension : for vast is the

" difference betwixt the blood of God,

" and the blood of his creatures and ser-

" vants, if we judge according to the dig-

" nity, and not to the substance of it. *What*

hast thou that thou hast not received ? re-

member what JESUS saith to all Chri-

stians, He that loveth father or mother more

than me, is not worthy of me : and he that

loveth son or daughter more than me, is not

worthy of me, Mat. 10. 37. and whosoever he

be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath,

he cannot be my disciple, Luk. 14. 33. We

can never do too much for JESUS : but

we may easily do too little ; though the

most

Ἐὶ χυμείους θυ-
νάτους ἡμῶν Χερσὺ
ὑπομείνομεν, &c.

S. Johan. Clim. Grad.

23. 11.

56 The Reformed Monastery; Or,

most we can do will never merit heaven, yet the least shall not obtain it: 'tis safe and impossible to exceed, but 'tis easie and dangerous to be defective.

O God, who hast prepared for them that love thee such good things as pass mans understanding, pour into our hearts such love towards thee, that we loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises which exceed all that we can desire, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

I have now assigned Love its full task; to repent and mortifie our lusts, to serve and obey God, and to abound in good works even free-will offerings. I have no more for it to do; I would only have it to encrease, to grow towards perfection, to be constant, and to endure unto the end. To help this forward, I have here added a meditation on the exaltation of our Blessed Saviour; some useful directions for the ordering of our lives; and four concluding Considerations, whereby to assist, direct and encourage the sincere lover of JESUS, in the discharge of this great and blessed duty, the work and labour of Love.

Let us consider one another, to provoke unto Love, and to good works, Heb. 10. 24.

CHAP. XV.

Meditation on the Exaltation of the Blessed J E S U S.

Ive and reign sweetest J E S U, for ever ! My dearest Lord, I heartily rejoice in that great power and glory to which now thou art exalted. When I consider what thou didst do, to rescue us from misery and to make us happy ; how thou didst lay by thy glories to intitle us to them ; becamest poor, to pay our debt ; becamest weak, to die, and to vanquish our enemies. When I consider this, I cannot but admire the greatness of thy charity, whereby thou wert moved thus to relieve and succour us, in suffering, and abasing thy self. I cannot also but be transported with joy, that in thy conflict with our enemies, thou didst obtain the victory, and thereby a Kingdom that shall have no end.

Lord, if thou hadst perished in our quarrel,

Ita ne summus omnium, unus factus est omnium, quis hoc fecit ? amor, dignitatis nescius, dignatione dives, affectu potens, suavis efficax: quid violentius ? triumphat de Deo amor. Bern.

58 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

rel, if death had still detained thee, what grief ! what remediless anguish had it been to our souls ; not only to see our hopes frustrated: but also to see him oppress and overcome who with so much pity and generosity engaged for our deliverance ! But thou livest, dearest Lord, thou art triumphant, thou hast got the keys of death and of hell. Thou art the head and Saviour of the Church. Thou art the Judge of all men. Thou art the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Thou sittest at the right hand of the Majesty on high, above all principalities and powers. All power is given to thee in heaven and in earth. At thy Name, O Blessed *JESU*, every knee must bow : and that we do most willingly ; gladly acknowledging that thy name is exalted above every name. Thou alone hast redeemed, and hast power to save us. Thou alone hast the might and right to command us. Unhappy they that will not worship thee, and submit to thy government. Unhappy they that impart thine honour to created beings, and will not wholly depend upon thee.

Blessed be God that we have a Saviour whom without idolatry we may love and worship ; to whom we may offer our humble petitions, and at whose feet we may prostrate our selves. Blessed be God that he himself would become our Saviour. Had an Angel or man, been able and deputed

to work our Redemption, our love and gratitude might have been excessive, and provoked God to jealousy. But now Blessed JESU, we cannot humble our selves too low before thee ; we cannot exalt thee too high ; we can never exceed in paying our acknowledgments to thee. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* unto him therefore that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood ; and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father : to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. 5. 12. and 1. 6.

Blessed Lord, I rejoice that thou hast the disposal of me ; I willingly submit my self to thy good pleasure, both to obey and to suffer ; I desire that my heart and all my affections may wholly be subject to thee.

O why is thy name dishonoured ? thy Church persecuted ? thy holy Religion despised, or perverted ? and thou thy self rejected and rebelled against, even by many of them that have sworn allegiance to thee ?

O that it were in my power to advance thy Kingdom here, among my Fellow-Servants ; to bring all men in subjection to thee. But first, my Blessed Lord, let me sincerely submit to thy will, in all things.

Let never one of my words or actions send thee

80 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
thee that impious message of the rebellious
Citizens; *We will not have this man to reign*
over us, Luk. 19. 14. but now thou art ab-
sent, I beseech thee, let me observe thy
laws and own and reverence thy power,
in them to whom thou hast imparted it;
thy Church and Ministers. Thou art my
King, dearest *J E S U*, let me never see
that hour, that I shall not heartily love, and
humbly obey thee.

Consider, O my Soul, how great is the
happiness and honour, to be one of the
retinue of so great, so good a Master. Let
nothing cast thee down; thou shalt certainly
reign above, if thou art faithful here
below.

Jacob and his sons were in fear to perish
with hunger, because they knew not that
Joseph did reign in *Agypt*: but my timorous
heart, why shouldst thou fear any thing,
when thou knowest that *J E S U S* doth
reign in heaven? God hath given him power
over all flesh, that he might give eternal life,
to all that will sincerely give themselves to
him. If thou art his, thou canst not want
to be protected, and provided for. All
his servants are certainly prefer'd; all his
souldiers come to be Kings; the Crown of
life, the Kingdom of heaven, the glories
of eternity, are the recompences laid up
for his humble subjects.

Live and Reign, sweetest *J E S U*, for
ever.

The Love of JESUS. 61

ever. When I do consider that Legions of Angels, millions of blessed Souls, perpetually adore thee with the greatest extasie of love and divine joy ; that all pious men throughout all the world, express their love and gratitude, by daily worshipping and obeying of thee ; that all thy wicked enemies are seiz'd with fear and trembling before thee. When thus I see thee, blessed Lord, with the eyes of my faith, on the Throne of highest Majesty, encircled with glory and power : I then disdain the world, and am raised above my self, transported with pleasure, to see thy labours and sufferings thus justly rewarded ; to think that *mine* for thee, shall have the same reward, according to the utmost of my capacity.

And now my gracious Lord, this I make my request ; if I can add nothing to thy highest glory : yet let me enter in, and partake of thy joy ; for *they that love thy name shall be joyful in thee*, Psal. 5. 12.

CHAP. XVI.

Two general directions about the manifesting of our love to God.

IT is a Maxim in Morals, *quod cor non facit, non fit*, what the heart doth not, is reputed as not done ; it can deserve neither praise nor reward ; and it can signify nothing to any purpose of vertue. Now the heart is the fountain of humane affections, and the seat of love : so that the meaning is, that what is not done out of love, is insignificant and wholly unacceptable. Which truth holds in Religion also ; God earnestly requires the heart of all his worshippers, and without it, he doth accept neither their services, nor their oblations. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul ; and these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart, Deut. 6. 6.*

Love therefore must carry us through the whole course of our lives, through all our duty ; that our actions bearing its stamp, and signature, may be pleasing to God, and to us profitable. So that in the discharge of our several callings ; in our
inter-

intercourse with others, at home or abroad ;
and in the most common actions of our
lives, still we must act, as being acted by
a sincere love to God. It is one of the best
of those ancient Rules which were given
to ascetick persons ;

“ Let charity which
“ abides for ever ,
“ influence and go-
“ vern the use we
“ make of time, and

*In omnibus quibus
utilitur transitoria necessi-
tas, supereminet quæ
permanet: charitas. Reg.
Aug.*

“ other transitory things ; let it go along
with us in all our ways, and we shall cer-
tainly go right. But this, like other gene-
ral Rules, will signifie nothing, except it
be applied to particulars. My love to
JESUS must appear in what I do this
day, and what I shall do to morrow. The
justice and charity of the words I speak,
and the work I am about, must justify it,
that indeed I own JESUS for my Lord,
his Gospel for my Rule ; and his love, for
my comfort and encouragements. *Let cha-
rity which abides for ever, direct us in our use
of transitory things.*

It is the advice of some spiritual dire-
ctors, that we would single out some one
eminent Christian vertue , to the study
whereof we should more particularly ad-
dict our selves, and examine our growth
in grace, by our proficiency in it. This
may be much for our ease and for our ad-
vantage.

64 The Reformed Monastery ; Or,

vantage. For the Duties and Graces of our Religion are very numerous, not to be attained and attended to, all at once, and as they stand together : whereas if we make choice of any one single, which leads us to all the rest, and includes them all, our Christian advancement will be with greater speed and less difficulty, and we shall be masters of all other vertues, by having bent our strength and endeavours on the practice of one. Such a one, I am sure, is the love of God, the love of the Blessed *J E S U S*, which if well followed and attended to, will bring us to the highest perfection, to which any Christian can arrive in this life. Let it therefore be our chiefest care to beget and entertain in our hearts that most blessed love ; and then, to expresse and perfect it, by these two general Rules.

1. In all our actions to have respect to Gods will, and to seek to fulfil it, rather than our own. This is recommended to us by the Example of our Blessed Saviour, who professed that *he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him*: and this was his great demonstration of love to the Father. That

Probatio dilectionis exhibitio est operis. Greg. the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me Commandment even so I do : arise, let us

hence, Joh. 14. 31. He would go and deliver himself into the hands of his crucifiers, rather than not comply with that order he had received from God his Father. And thus if we chuse Gods will where it is most contradictory to our own desires, we shall make it appear that indeed we love him. *Abraham* was called the Friend of God; and God bare him witness that he indeed feared God, when in obedience to the divine commandment he would have sacrificed his beloved *Isaac*: and if we sacrifice our will to God, to act in all things according to what he hath revealed; to square our actions, great or small, according to the Rules he hath prescribed to us, then God will be certified that we indeed love him; our readiness to obey his pleasure, will speak the heartiness of our affection.

We see how readily Courtiers conform themselves to the humour and pleasure of their Prince: and shall we think it hard to conform to what God hath required of us: our obedience being our greatest profit here, and our infinite happiness in the world to come? Sure 'tis no difficult matter to say with that great lover of *JESUS*; Lord what wilt thou have me to do? *Act. 9. 6.* and if love hath disposed us to say it, 'twill be easie enough to do it afterwards.

In the second place, as we must set our
K 5 hand

66 *The Reformed Monastery, Or,*

hand to that prayer we ought to say daily; *Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,* so must we also submit our necks to it. I mean, that in compliance to the will of God, we must give up our selves, as well to patient sufferance, as to cheerful obedience.

One of the great advantages the Cœnobites had in their communities, was the casting out those two words, which are the seeds of contention and the disturbers of the world, *mine, and thine*: and if we resign all, to God, who is indeed the true proprietor, we shall bear the loss of any thing, without repining against him; we shall never differ with him, about that which is not our own; we shall have peace with him, whatever we suffer. *God is the judge, he setteth up one; and bringeth down another.* All things that happen are ordered by his infinite power and wisdom; therefore in all, let us rejoice in his Government, and with a cheerful submission humbly bow and worship, and say with his Saints; *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, Rev. 19. 6.*

If we truly love God, we shall as willingly suffer any thing from him, as we would for him. persuaded that it is for our good, we shall not only remain satisfied, but thankful also. I am sure, 'tis
much

much more reasonable we should follow Gods will, than he ours. And some have said, that it is better and more acceptable to God, to suffer afflictions patiently, than in prosperity to do the best of things.

Æquius est ut nos ejus, quam ut ille nostram sequatur voluntatem. Aug.

Perfectius est adversa tolerare patienter, quam bonis operibus insudare.

Let us therefore in all our sorrows, humble our selves and look up to heaven, and say ; *Calicem quem dedit Pater ; The Cup that my heavenly Father giveth me, shall I not drink it ?* we shall always prosper, and have all things at wish, and command all events, *as one did the winds and weather,* In vit. Patr. if we by love adhere to God, and make his will our own, *He that hath, and seeth all things in one,* may always remain satisfied, and have true peace in God.

Magna res est amor ; magnum omnino bonum, quod solum leve facit omne onerosum, & fert aequaliter omne inæquale : nam onus sine onere portat, & omne amarum dulce ac sapidum efficit. Thom. de Kemp. The guilty prisoner dreads every noise, and trembles when the door opens, for fear of his deserved doom ; when on the same accounts, the innocent is both calm and joyful, expecting to be delivered. Now, guilt and the highest treason before God, is to love any thing better

68 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

better than him, and to oppose our will to his, he that doth so, may well be dismayed and troubled, and full of sad apprehensions : and he that sincerely loves God and chuseth his will in all things, is safe and undaunted, always pleased and happy.

CHAP. XVII.

The two former Rules explained and enlarged.

ACTS beget and perfect habits, and thus to make our actions and passions so many acts and demonstrations of our love to God, will speedily encrease that love, and soon bring us to perfect peace and happiness.

But commonly it is thought, that to make it appear that we love God, we must do great and extraordinary things, fly up above other mens pitch, and always be as it were gazing and sighing heaven-ward. This hath frightened many from a religious life, from devoting themselves to the love of *JESUS* : But the truth is, that love is best exprest by doing well our ordinary actions, that which is our proper duty and employment.

Our

Our greatest perfection here, is contained in these two. 1. To do what God requires of us, and 2. to do it well. The first is to discharge the duties of that station wherein God hath placed us ; *That every man wherein he is called, therein he should abide with God, and do his own business.* This is our task as we are men, and as we are Christians. Not to do things wonderful and inimitable : but faithfully to discharge what our place requires from us, to pay to all, that love and obedience, which nature and Religion appoint ;* to follow our work , whatever it be, even the most servile labours, *as to the Lord and not to men : knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*

Some enter a dark cell, and some go long pilgrimages, but wherever providence had placed them , there they might best have wrought their Salvation. To do what we should do in a mean place, is much better, than to undertake greater things ,

Græci studia transformantur, sed regnum Dei intra vos est.
S. Athan.

have wrought their

Nemo fugit adversarium de loco ad locum sed de vitiis ad virtutem.
Faust. Serm.

which we were not obliged to. The first frees us from, and the other doth ingage us into temptation. *The commandment I give thee*

70 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

thee this day, is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off, it is not in heaven, neither is it beyond the sea : but the word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou maist do it, Deut. 30. 11. It maketh some Quakers, some fantastical, and some mad, the seeking to profess and to do strange things, things out of the road. And even in the best of all religious institutes, there is nothing good, except it be this, that they are particular applications of the general Gospel-Rules ; which particular applications to times, persons, and places, are best made by the designation of divine providence, which to every man appoints that sphere, wherein he is bound to move regularly. Let us therefore humbly acquiesce to Gods wise disposal, making that to be our study and work, which our state and condition doth require from us : and let our next care be, in the second place to be intent upon that, and to do it well.

In what appears before the world, commonly men put a varnish upon their actions and their behaviour ; when oftentimes at home they are loose tyrannical, and unjust. But act in private and every where, *tantumquam sub alicujus boni viri, ac semper presentis oculis*, said Seneca ; as always in the sight of God ; in the most publick view. For your actions at home, in your closet and in
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The Love of JESUS. 71

your family are noted and registred before God : and 'tis by the doing them well, that you advance forward, towards perfection and glory.

Hoc age, hoc age, was often cryed by a herald whilst the heathen worshipped their Gods. *Mind your business, mind that you are about.* That we must do in all actions, even them that relate only to this life, diligently and faithfully to do them as well as we can. The praise of an actor on the stage of this world, is to act his part well and decently, whatever it be ; and that must be our care, to be just and exact, in being a good servant or master ; artist, or whatever it be. In so being consists our perfection, and the demonstration of our love to God.

So likewise in things that pertain to a better life ; when you pray, read or meditate, do it with a serious attention, and the greatest application your mind is capable of. Do it as if you were now to die, and that were the last thing you shall ever do for God, and for your own soul ; for if you be in haste, in a hurry, and in a distraction, you wholly lose your time and your reward.

It is storied in some of the legends, that at prayers, S. *Bernard* saw divers Angels, noting down the behaviour of the assistants ; some in golden letters, some in ink, and
some

72 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

in water only, according to the devotion or negligence of them that prayed. Though the relation looks much like a fable, yet there is this truth in it; that they certainly weary themselves to no purpose who serve God without attention and without fervour: and do the business of their soul in a careless and trifling way.

As Mathematicians consider an abstract quantity, not regarding whether of Gold or clay: so it is not so much the matter of our actions, as the manner of doing them, that most recommends them to God, and makes them expressions of our love to *JESUS*.

As for the second Rule of bearing patiently what ever happens. It must be also extended to the meanest sorrows and vexations.

In all things let us be content that Gods will should take place. Let us carefully secure our duty, and afterwards let us care for no more; leave the event to God, and let him chuse for us.

It is to no purpose to resolve to bear evenly great calamities, which perhaps shall never happen; to gather a stock of patience against violent persecutions and the flames of martyrdom: and mean while to be fretful and angry, for every loss and trifling accident that croseth our humour. This is but self deceit, and an imaginary patience,

patience, stoutly to resolve upon great evils when they are far off, and yield to lesser when present. We are rather to remember the words of our Blessed Lord, *to take up our cross daily and follow him*. The word *daily* imports, that the evils of every day are to be born with patience and a composed mind. And that the wrongs and vexations we meet withall in our intercourse with others, as well as great calamities, are our own proper cross, which our Christian profession, and love to *JESUS*, obligeth us to bear and submit to.

When a rough-hewn plank is to be joined to one that is even, it must be plained and made smooth by great or smaller strokes, at the workmans discretion : our deformed soul, or crooked will is to be close united to God who is most equal and perfect, therein consists our happiness ; we must therefore let him (who is pleased to undertake that work) polish and rectifie our soul, and make them conformable to his blessed will, by what means he pleaseth ; by great or lesser blows, according as he knows to be expedient. Let us follow the Prince of sufferings by love and imitation, cheerfully bearing our cross, whatever it be ; mindful of this profitable advice of the son of Sirach. *My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation ; set thy heart aright and constantly endure, and make not*

74 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

not haste in time of trouble. whatsoever is brought unto thee take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate. They that fear the Lord will not disobey his word, and they that love him, will keep his ways.

CHAP. XVIII.

Some more particular directions how to order our lives by the love of JESUS.

FROM the happy and safe cloister of love, wherein thou art entred, look not abroad upon that world that lies in wickedness; *Follow not the multitude to do*

*Ve tibi flumen moris
humani. Aug.*

evil; for men take hand in hand, and betray one another to folly and ruine. Gods

benefits are lost upon the major part of them; they have no sense of the divine mercies; ungratitude is their proper character and their greatest guilt. Rare felix sunt omnes; all might easily be happy, if they would love and be thankful.

Read the lives of primitive Saints, and consider them that are now truly religious and good men. Converse with them, and
with

with them learn to spend thy time carefully and well. Time is short and precious, spend it upon that that will turn to account when time shall be no more. It leads to an endless eternity, and it is given thee, to make that eternity infinite in happiness, as in duration. Indulge not then to idleness, for it will bring temptations upon thee, and make them prevailing. Labour, watchfulness, and prayer, make us victorious over sin, and win the incorruptible crown.

Use all means whereby thou maist be advanced in thy way to heaven; thou canst never work out thy salvation with too much care and diligence.

'Tis good to make sure work in so great a concern; for multitudes perish through

Milo cautior esse quam fortior; fortis enim sepe capius est, cauius rarissime.

carelessness and presumption; and the way to eternal life is streight and narrow. But in the use of such means as I recommend, take heed of deceiving thy self, and resting in outward observations, making that the end, which is only a way to lead thee to vertue.

Thou maist carry thy Bible about, and read the Gospel, and yet not be a good Christian. Thou maist

Ὁυ γὰρ ἀρετὴ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χρεῖσιν ποιεῖν ἀνεγνώσκειν.

76 The Reformed Monastery ; Or,

go up to the Temple to pray, fast and give alms, and profess the greatest strictness with the Pharisee, and yet still be an hypocrite except thou

Non Hierosolymis fuisse ; sed Hierosolymis bene vixisse laudandum. Hieron.

dost truly love God.

Love therefore, and often think that thou shalt die ; for that will much increase thy diligence and thy sincerity. Many in the Church of Rome, put on when they die a Fryers habit, and much confide therein : do thou put on by times thy dying thoughts ; consider seriously ; and steal time as often as thou canst, to sequester thy self from the world. Gods secret voice is not heard in the croud, and no man meditates in the Market. Retire and think of death, and put on the affections of a penitent ; humility, shame, and sorrow for thy past follies ; care and watchfulness for that rest of time

Deus dat spatium ut pereant crimina non homines. Prosp. Aquit.

bed, would always

Neminem Christianum absque penitentia mori oportere.

which God gives thee to destroy thy sins, and to save thy soul. S. Austin on his death have the penitential Psalms, saying that every Christian must die a penitent. So must he live, that would live well ; for contrition and mortification will make thee charitable and contented ;

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tented ; will make thee despise the world, and chuse the best and safest course of life, which if some thing hard at the first, will soon by use become easie.

Optimam vite rationem deligendam, & brevi consuetudine fiet jucunda.

When men have an opportunity to eat and drink, to obtain profit or pleasure, they seldom neglect it, and put it off to uncertain delays : Now thou canst, if thou wilt, serve God, shew thy love to JESUS, and make sure of heaven, defer it not till time be past, or be worse. Think what thou wouldst advise thy friend to do, and do thou act accordingly.

Often think upon thy reward, and look up to heaven ; hope sets the world at work. *Jacob's* drudgery fourteen years, seemed but a few days to him, because he had *Rachel* before his eyes, and loved her affectionately, *Gen. 29. 30.*

All is not to be done to day, go on in the way of love and duty. Our life is a course, not a leap ; therefore faint not, and be not displeased with thy self, if thou hast not yet done what must not be finisht, till thy life be so. *S. Anthony's* impatience was thus reproved and cured by an Angel, "work

Nunc paululum laborando manibus ; nunc genibus flexis orando deinde corpus reficiendo, post quiescendo, & rursum iterum operando, Anthony, sic fac tu, & salvus eris,

now

78 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

“now, afterward pray, then refresh thy
“wearied nature : and after that, return
“again to thy labour and devotion. Let
“this be thy course all thy way, and salva-
“tion shall be thy end.

Thus, betwixt grace and nature, be-
twixt labour and Religion distribute thy
time : and in all these, let the love of
J E S U S accompany and direct thee, and
it will certainly bring thee to his glory;
after thou halt in this manner, lived in his
favour, thou shalt enter into his joy.

I love them that love me, (saith the Lord)
and they that seek me early shall find me, Prov.
8. 17.

CHAP. XIX.

*That upon all accounts, God should be
loved above all things.*

TH E first Consideration is, that it is
most unjust and unreasonable to love
any creature to the prejudice of the Cre-
ator. As all things have their being from
God, so they have from him all the good-
ness and beauty which makes them lovely
to us, and God drawing upon visible ob-
jects fair copies of his invisible perfections,
designed

designed to be loved in them : or that they should be loved in him, and for his sake. If men being delighted with the beauty of the heavenly host took them to be gods, let them know how much better the Lord of them is, for the first Author of beauty hath created them : for by the beauty and greatness of the creatures proportionably the maker of them is seen, Wisd. 13. 3. Beauty and goodness are the proper object of love : and therefore, God who is the first and supreme beauty and goodness, should be loved before all things.

We indeed reverence Princes in their seals and arms, in their meanest servants clothed with their livery : but should a subject set up these in the royal Throne, and transfer to them, or even to the greatest Favorite, those special honours which belong to the Prince only ; he should justly be deemed a Rebel, and his proceedings would be as unjustifiable, as the disloyal distinction of *taking arms by the Kings Authority against his Person*. Yet such are the proceedings of all disorderly lovers, I mean of all sinners : who setting more of their affections upon the creatures, than upon God the Creator, pay them afterwards a greater veneration than they do to him ; having exalted honours, pleasures and riches into the Imperial chair, they do more for them than for the Sovereign himself :

80 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

himself : nay they obey them to their prejudice, and against his exprefs command. Thus vicious unreasonable men burn in the shade, and freeze where the Sun shines ; they dote upon inferior beauties, and neglect the highest and most perfect ; they take fire at dark shadows, and find no heat in the brightest light. Great men have a respect paid them, in their degenerating posterity : great Artists are respected in their liveless children ; we highly honour unhappy Pagans in those labours of theirs which adorn our closets and libraries : God only is dishonoured in his works, the more perfect he hath made them, the more injurious they prove to him. *Phidias* and *Apelles* are remembred with veneration, in a fine picture or Statue : God only is ingratefully forgotten in a lovely creature whereof he is Maker.

*Al surdum est genu
posito simulacra adorare,
& suspicere, fabros vero
quæ fecerunt contem-
nere.*

An absurd impiety this is, which *Seneca* reproved in his fellow heathen, to worship and deifie the

carved image, and to take no notice of the Carver that made it.

God hath done like a loving father, who jealous of his sons affection, would have none to attend him but such as wear his livery ; would have the picture of himself hang in every room ; and all the goods in the

the house marked with his name and cypher : So God, who loves men tenderly, and desires to be by them loved again, hath put something of himself in all the creatures he hath appointed to serve us ; that, which way soever we turn our eyes, we might be put in mind of him, he hath stamped his name in more or less legible Characters, upon all the goods and utensils of this his great house, the world, wherein he hath placed us. And now shall we do like a simple child, who turning his back upon his father, should look and smile on his picture, and caress it, and wait upon it, and ask it blessing, while he slight the original ? So absurd a thing would be counted madness, and move pity or laughter ; but when we act the same folly, in loving the world while we despise God, we are highly criminal, and we highly provoke our heavenly Father, thus to return to him contempt and disobedience for the gracious tokens of his love.

From hence it follows, that, as we should love God above all, and all things, things in him and for him ; we should also love those things most, which have most of his impress and likeness. Therefore, man who is created after Gods image, should be by us loved above all other creatures : and that part of man which is chiefly adorned with the likeness of God, should have

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82 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

the greater share of our affection. God himself values humane souls at a high rate, because they are like him ; as appears by what he hath done and suffered to save them. And for the same reason also, we should pay to the souls of men the best part of that kindness we owe them : and if we do not, we give our friends no greater love than children do their puppets ; for they dress them fine, and lay them soft, and kiss and embrace them : Just as they who aim at nothing more, than to make their friends merry, to wish them toys and gaudy things and to see them at ease. A fondness inexcusable in rational creatures, especially in Christians, who know the worth of an immortal soul and the great concern of Eternity : and yet seek only to gratifie the material part of their friends which is subject to corruption, and to ingage their affections to the world which passeth away and they must soon leave. As if when King *Edward* the first was hastening out of the Holy-land hither to receive the Crown which expected him, his friends had staid him by the way, and invited him to rest and ease, and provided for him all Princely delights, and entertainments, and retarded his coming so long, till he had forgot or lost his right and his Kingdom. *what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul ? and what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?* We

The Love of JESUS. 83

We are indeed much commanded to love one another, and in this consisteth one great half of our Religion, all justice and charity, and all the duties of the second Table. To love our brother as we ought, is the best demonstration of our love to God, for *he that says he loves God, and hateth his brother, is a liar*, saith S. John, 1 Joh. 4. 20. and *love worketh no ill to his neighbour, and is therefore the fulfilling of the law*, saith S. Paul, Rom. 13. 10. but a man is to love his neighbour as himself, Mat. 19. 19. and therefore as he is most obliged to seek for himself the kingdom of God and its righteousness: so should he in the first place endeavour to procure it to his friend. Or else we are to love one another as Christ hath loved us, Joh. 13. 33. and that was in redeeming our souls and purchasing for us heavenly joys and eternal life: not in providing ease and sensual pleasures to our bodies here in this world. The result of this is, that in the first place we should love God infinitely and for his own sake: and that in the next, we should love those things most which have a nearest relation to God; Grace and Vertue, Religion, Holiness and Men; especially their Souls, which are an image of the Deity; especially sanctified souls which are most like God. Afterwards our lesser love for less Divine Objects, may be reasonable and innocent: and however we have

84 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*
secured a great duty and a great happiness.
*To love God with all the heart, and with all
the understanding, and with all the soul, and
with all the strength, and to love his neighbour
as himself, is more than all whole burnt offer-
ings and sacrifices, Mar. 13. 33.*

CHAP. XX.

*That as it is most just, so it is most easie
to love God.*

A Second consideration may be, that it
is most just and easie to love God.
That it is most just, is shewn all along this
discourse, wherein I have represented the
more general and most excellent bene-
fits of God to mankind: all the which chal-
lenge and deserve the greatest love our
hearts are capable of. God had required
of his people that the first born and the
first fruits should be consecrated to him,
thereby to acknowledge him the author of
all their blessings and the giver of all their
increase: Now the first-born of our souls,
the first-fruits of our hearts is love, which
God, who gives us all things, demands as
an acknowledgment from us, *Thou shalt
love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and
with*

The Love of JESUS. 85

with all thy soul. We therefore commit a greater sacrilege, if we deny him so just a tribute, than if a Jew had rob'd him of his first grapes or his first ears of corn. But it is so much the more just, in that it is most easie to love God. Infinite perfections, an abyss of goodness whence rivers and oceans of good things do perpetually flow, one would think should swallow up the hearts and affections of men: as indeed it doth, of all that duly consider it. And more perfectly of beatified Saints, and of those blessed spirits who minister before his throne and are all flame for him. Besides, 'tis natural for men to love what is theirs, propriety begets or increaseth love: Now God is our God; he hath given himself for us, he doth now, and will more intirely hereafter give himself to us; he made us for the enjoyment of himself, and for that purpose he hath redeemed us: and that we might all say, with *David*, *O God, thou art my God*, that God might shew his kindness and indear himself to us, and assert our right to him, he hath assumed the names of those relations who love us best, whom we love most tenderly, and whom we count most ours. God the Father is pleased to be called our Father, God the Son, our Brother, and God the Holy Ghost our Comforter, as it were our Friend: thereby to expresse that affection which he hath for us,

86 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

and the propriety which we may claim in

Nimis durus est animus, qui amorem eius uitro non impendat, nihil tamen rependere. Aug.

him. Sure 'tis an easie thing to love them that love us : and where God hath expressed so much love,

'tis strangely unnatural if we are not affected with it.

Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts, saith the Wise man, *Prov. 19. 6.* Now what gifts hath our God given us ! or rather, what gifts hath he not given us ! and what perverse violence do they offer nature, that seek to confute *Solomons* saying, in this instance where it should be most true. Certainly 'tis an easie thing to love infinite perfections, an infinite goodness ; one that ever did, and ever doth us good ; from whom we daily receive favours, so great and so many that we can tell neither their worth nor number : Wherefore *S. Aug.*

Potes miki dicere, non habeo quod tribuam egeni, non possum jejunare, non possum flere. Numquid potes miki dicere charitatem habere non possum, &c.

saith, that to love God is so natural, so easie, so infinitely just, and so much our duty, that to omit it can admit of no plea nor pretence, and is inexcusable, and criminal

in the highest degree. Perhaps thou wilt say, I cannot fast, I cannot weep, I have not what to give to the poor, but
canst

canst thou say, I cannot love God? is there any obstacle in thy way? dost thou want inducements or a heart to do it? No, doubtless 'tis the easiest thing in the world to love him that is most lovely, to love our greatest benefactor, to love him who is infinitely kind and loving to us. Some vertues require opportunities and cannot be exercised for want of them: but whether thou beest sickly or healthy, whether thy condition be high or low, whether thy leisure be much or little, whether thy calling be easie or laborious, thou maist love; love doth not pinch the belly, wears not the hands, makes not the head ache, empties not the purse: for love is neither grief nor pain; 'tis easie to all men, none can plead any excuse against it.

*Facilis res est, Domine
JESU CHRISTE
superamande, dilectio tua,
à qua nullus cujuscunq;
status, gradus, aut con-
ditionis existat excusari
potest, &c. Idiot.*

C H A P. XIX.

An Objection answered, which might be raised against this Book and its Subject.

NOW here I will digress a little to answer two Objections which possibly might be made against what I have said of Divine Love. The first, that I have humanized it too much; that whereas it is supernatural and should be spiritual, I have made it almost palpable and sensible. To this I say, that whether we set our love upon earthly or heavenly things, upon God or upon the world, still it is the same passion, which resides in the same humane faculty. The will of man, and the effects thereof are alike evident and real. He that truly loves God, hath that same hearty affection for him, as to the kind, as one friend hath for another: only being joined with greater reverence and submission to so glorious a Majesty, it is called *Religious* and devout. But a sincere lover of *JESUS* will seek to please him, and to be with him, and to enjoy him, and do all that for him, which men would do for those whom they love

love heartily : all the difference is, that Divine Love hath its proper expressions, can never be too great, and is in all respects infinitely more excellent than the love of any creature. Therefore, if in some places I have represented things plainly, and made that, in some manner to be touched by sense which is only the object of faith, my design was thereby to move the affections, and to bring down the notions of Religion, from the head into the heart. *Faith should be the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, Heb. 11.1.* We should consider things of faith, whether past or to come, as if they had now a real subsistence, as if they were present before our eyes ; their greatness then, would be better viewed, and have the greater power upon us : as *Moses*, who, by consideration, *seeing him who is invisible*, ver. 27. was thereby enabled to prefer the afflictions of Gods people to the pleasures and dignities of the Courts of *Pharaoh*. I believe it was a great advantage to the Piety of Primitive ages, that they lived near the time when those things were acted, which we now believe at a greater distance : for then the Revelations of the New Testament were every Christians discourse and admiration ; the proximity of the times made them almost visible, and the recent footsteps of those great trans-

L 5 actions.

90 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

actions gave them a kind of sensibility; whereby their thoughts and considerations were drawn and retained, and made serious and efficacious. And I believe it may be a great cause of the degeneracy of these after ages, that faith is become too notional, too metaphysical and abstracted, a matter of dispute and science, rather than of practice and conscience: whereas we should vest the great objects of our faith with material circumstances, to make them in some manner the object of sense, that to us it might be said as *S. Paul to the Galatians, Before your eyes J E S U S C H R I S T hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you, Gal. 3. 1.* and that, in all other instances, our faith might be to us, *the evidence of things not seen.* When we look upon the things of revelation as far distant from us, they appear hardly credible, and not much to be regarded: but a closer viewing of them, by a nearer and almost sensible consideration would make them appear great and wonderful, would make deep and lasting impressions on our minds, and cause us to cry out with grief and wonder; Lord, what is man, that thou art thus mindful of him! or rather, what is man, that he is unmindful of thee! However, I have the warrant, and do claim the privilege of them that write meditations, and make contemplations palpable and to be seen:

to

to suppose dialogues, to describe what was past long ago, as now in doing, and to represent things as present and visible ; and well we may, especially when we treat of the love of God shewed to mankind in *J E S U S* : for that love became palpable, and conversed among men, and was manifested to sense, in the birth, the actions, and the sufferings of our Blessed Saviour : who by becoming man, seemed to comply with that unjust and yet general desire which men had, of worshipping humane creatures, and having things visible and material for the object of their devotion and Religious love.

C H A P. XXII.

The second Objection concerning the love of J E S U S, answered.

TH E other Objection would perhaps be made by them who scruple and refuse to bow at the Holy name of *J E S U S*, and who might say that I have mentioned it too often, and too oftencalled divine charity, The love of *J E S U S* : and that in so doing I have been either superstitious or injurious to God. To this I answer, That as our Blessed Saviour

92 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

Saviour saith, *He that hateth me, hateth my father also,* Joh. 15. 23. so we may say, that he that loveth him loveth his father also. For the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost are one and the same God blessed for ever; *he that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten,* and so reciprocally. The Divine Essence is but one, it admits of no division: therefore whatever honour is paid to one of the Divine Persons, is paid to all Three; the Ever-glorious Trinity is honoured by it. But then it must be considered that *J E S U S* the second Person of that Blessed and Glorious Trinity is not only God, but also Man, and so Mediator betwixt God and Man: so that by, and through him we pray, we worship, we love God. This is the great, the most excellent benefit of God to his Church, that he gave *J E S U S C H R I S T* his Blessed Son to

be the head of it; who prays for us, and prays in us, and is prayed to by us; as *S. Aug.* saith. As God

*Qui orat pro nobis;
orat in nobis; & oratur a
nobis.*

manifested his love to men in *J E S U S*: so in *J E S U S* men offer the returns of their love to God; *In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him,* 1 Joh. 4. 9. and in this is manifested our love towards God, that

that we receive, and love, and obey that Son. With this, God is in no wise offended, but rather infinitely well pleased; *he that loveth me shall be loved of my father*; saith our Blessed Saviour, *Joh. 14. 21* *If a man love me, he will keep my word, and my father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him, ver. 23.* and again, *If any man serve me, him will my father honour, Joh. 12. 26.* nay, he expressly tells his disciples, that the Father loved them, because they loved him, whom the Father had sent; *The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, John 16. 27.* For though we owe our redemption to the infinite mercies of God Father, Son and Holy Ghost: yet in a more especial manner we are engaged to the Son, who personally came down from heaven, *for us men and for our salvation.* J E S U S is the Author and finisher of our faith, he is the Founder of our Holy Religion; it is he hath revealed those doctrines we are to believe; it is he hath given us those laws and precepts whereby we are to live; it is he from whom we are called Christians; it is he who for us despised the shame and endured the Cross, who hath shed his blood and given his life a ransom for ours; it is he who by contracting a near relation with us, becoming our brother, hath caused us to be adopted Sons of God, and heirs with him of an eternal kingdom;
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94 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

it is he who can save them to the uttermost that come to God by him; it is he who

Caput positum in cœlestibus corpus suum gubernat, separatim quidem visione sed annexum charitate. Aug.

is the head of the Church, to whom we must be united by Love, that we may be his members, and derive life from him;

it is he who is our Lord and Master, and will be our judge and our rewarder, if we be faithful to him. *For this end Christ died and rose again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, saith S. Paul, Rom. 14. 9. God hath made that same JESUS whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ, him God hath exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, saith S. Peter, Act. 2. 36. and 5. 31. All power is given him in heaven and earth: and he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. Hence the frequent and urgent exhortations to follow and imitate, to serve and obey JESUS; Hence those pathetick words of S. Paul, The love of Christ constraineth us, 2 Cor. 5. 14. and again, what things were gain to me I counted loss for Christ: yea doubtless and I count all things loss, for the excellency of the Knowledge of JESUS CHRIST my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, Phil. 3. 7, 8. 'Tis JESUS hath won our hearts to God; 'tis he hath reconciled*

ciled us from a state of enmity to a state of love. Besides that God was justly angry for our rebellions, his glories are so bright, so amazing, his Divine Majesty so high, that to love a being

so infinitely above us might have been thought prophane-
ness or presumption ;

*Non bene conveniunt
nec in una sede moran-
tur, Majestas & amor.*

respect, not friendship, is the affection of subjects to Princes. *Θεός* *Θεός* was an ordinary Epithete for the heathen gods, who were thought to be envious rather than loving to men ; and even the *Israelites* were amazed and terrified at the sight of a heavenly messenger, crying *we shall die for we have seen God.* 'Tis the great humiliation of JESUS, hath procured and established an everlasting reconciliation and friendship betwixt God and man. God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners *Christ died for us*, Rom. 5. 8. and now there is neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor any other creature can separate us from the love of God which is in CHRIST JESUS our LORD, Rom. 8. 39.

Therefore for a reward of the great sufferings and abasement of JESUS, God hath given him a supreme authority over all the world, *Men and Angels being made subject unto him ; because he made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a ser-*
vant;

96 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

vant, and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of J E S U S every thing should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth: and every tongue should confess, that J E S U S C H R I S T is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. 2. 7, 8, &c. Our love and obedience to J E S U S derogates nothing from, but belongs to God: 'Tis to the glory of God the Father. God hath highly exalted J E S U S for his humiliation, and for the same cause we ought also to love and exalt him, as much as possibly we can, because it was for us; not only bow at his name, but even kneel and kiss the ground, when he only sees us; no fear of exceeding here, no fear of superstition: we can never shew him too much love or respect: Psal. 72. All Kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall do him service: prayer shall be made unto him, and daily shall be be praised. Amen.

C H A P.

CHAP. XXIII.

That it is most pleasant and safe to love God.

A Third consideration will be, that it is most pleasant and safe to love God. Love may cause trouble, but it certainly is the spring or parent of all joy and satisfaction. He that hath an affection to nothing hath pleasure in nothing: could the imaginary insensibleness of the Stoicks really seize upon any man: if he could never be miserable, he would also be incapable of all happiness. 'Tis true indeed that the love of worldly things in that they are vain and perishing, is it self vanity and vexation: *qui multum amat plus dolet*, is certainly true of all but the Divine Love. He that hath many friends hath many sorrows; he that loves many things hath many things to fear for: 'Tis only God that hath those infinite excellencies which can fully replenish our minds and desires: 'Tis only God that admits of no *variableness*, neither shadow of turning: and therefore 'tis the love of God alone that can make us eternally and intirely happy. It is reported of a person of great

98 *The Reformed Monastery ; Or,*

great sanctity, that an evil spirit confess to him, that were it possible for one who loves God to come into hell ; yet were it impossible he should be miserable, but that it would rather sink hell it self and make it disappear, or else make it a paradise for him. Though the relation may be fabulous, yet I believe the thing it self is true : he that is joined to God by love, and so possess of him, who is the fountain of all joy, and bliss, it is not possible he can be miserable ; despair the hell of the damned can never seize his soul. However, I am confident that the love of God would sweeten all the bitterness of our innocent miseries, and that it is only the imperfection of a Christians love that exposeth his mind to the vexation of humane sorrows. I am not (to my grief) a competent witness to this truth : but there have been many Saints and devout persons who, in the fervency of their love to God, have found those joys,

*Nihil cruc sensit in
merore, dum animus est
in Cælo."*

those ravishments of joy which are ineffable, and which made them, in some manner insensible and incapable of any great sorrow. And even the lesser love of more imperfect, though sincere, Christians, doth in a great measure take away the sense of humane calamities, and brings to their minds the greatest contentment and delight this world is capable of. A

A mans heart is more where it loves than where it lives; *he that loveth dwelleth in God and God in him,* 1 John 4. 16. and what greater, what more excellent bliss can we imagine or desire? what stronger expression could one find to express the highest felicities? *to dwell in God!* to be swallowed up in an abyss of infinite goodness! to be overwhelmed in the immensity of Divine Joys and perfection! as an atom in the air, as a drop of water in the Ocean: so *so he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.* Nothing can better represent those transcendent and delicious raptures wherewith the soul is inebriated and raised above it self. This was it made the Holy Martyrs shout and rejoyce in the midst of the flames: they *dwelt in God*; no sorrow, no harm could approach them. Happy are they that can say with S. Paul, *Our life is hid with Christ in God,* Col. 3. 3. and *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,* Gal. 2. 20. The love of God fits us for the joys of heaven, and is an anticipation of them; it powerfully governs the will,

*Magis est ubi amatur
quam ubi animatur.*

*Deus Charitas est, quid
pretiosius? & qui minet
in Charitate, in Deo ma-
net, quid securius? &
Deus in eo, quid jucun-
dus? Bern.*

*Extasis facit amor,
amatores suo statu di-
mover, sui juris esse non
sunt. Dionys. de divina
nom.*

100 *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

will, and it sweetly overflows the mind; it is the perfection of grace, and will be the consummation of glory: but 'tis much easier and happier to feel than to express it. *How much better is thy love than wine, and the smell of thine ointment than all spices!* Cant. 4. 10.

One thing that adds much to the worth and the pleasure of Divine Love, is that it never fails: it is of the nature of its object, eternal, as God is; *whether there be prophecies, they shall fail: whether there be tongues, they shall cease: whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away: but charity never faileth.*

1 Cor. 13. 8. Faith and hope may accompany us as far as heaven-gate, but there they for sake us; the one is turned into sight and the other into enjoyment; love alone enters and abides with us to eternity. Our greatest safety therefore as well as pleasure consists in loving God affectionately; for that love which *never faileth* secures our duty here and our happiness hereafter. We are sure never to live, and never to perish in sin, if we love *JESUS* sincerely: *He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God*: and there neither sin nor misery can come to hurt him.

*Quid refert naturæ esse
quod potes effici voluntate?* Chrys.

“ What matters it

“ then, to be by na-

“ ture, what we may

“ be by choice and

“ affection? If of our selves we are not holy and happy, we may be so by love; the love
of

of God will transform us into his nature, and make us partakers of his holiness and happiness. Love kills us in our selves, that we may live in God, *Occidit quod sumus, ut simus quod non eramus.* Aug. It maketh such a change in us, that we are no longer what we were, as to the sinfulness and wretchedness of our condition. The New Commandment maketh the New Creature; men become Gods by loving God. Love considers and dischargeth all the duties of Religion: it allows of no omission nor transgression: Love is the fulfilling of the law: this is love that we keep his Commandments, 2 John 6. *Ille sancte & juste agit qui sanctam habet dilectionem.* Aug. He is a Holy Man whose love is holy, for love having the rule and direction of all mans passions and affections, they become either good or bad according to the nature of what they love. Therefore to know whether a man be virtuous or no, we inquire not what his condition is, or what are his parts and learning: but what he delights in, what he loves: for if he loves the world and himself, he is certainly vain and vicious, but if he loves God, he is pious and good, and of a certainty he can never perish.

Mandato novo facit hominem novum, homines amando Deum dii efficiuntur. Aug.

Non faciunt bonos vel malos mores, nisi boni vel mali amores. Aug.

If natural love be so powerful and active, as we know it is : how much more when it is set upon God and by him assisted ? This therefore doth greatly manifest how secure and well guarded they are that love God, in that their holy love masters and mortifies their unholy affections. What is it that hurries men to sin and hell and destruction, but their masterless and unruly passion ? now love can not only subdue them, but even makes them useful and subservient to vertue ; the love of God sanctifies all passions and makes them serviceable. If it cannot make him meek who is of an angry nature ; it will make him angry against sin, and against himself a sinner : if it doth not make him bold and generous whose temper inclines him to timorousness ; it will turn his fear into prudence, and make him not dare to offend God : if it makes him not cheerful who naturally is melancholy ; it will turn his sadness into penitent sorrow, and make him a *blessed mourner*. And so

Amor ubi venerit, ceteros in se traducit & capit ad affectus. S. Bern.

all other passions, love will make them instruments of vertue, or occasions of a greater reward : that is, it will either fight and conquer them, or else put them to a good use. Love is obeyed wherever it appears, and Divine Love is irresistible : it overcomes all difficulties,

culties, nay, it scorns
the name of difficul-
ty, saith S. Augustine;

*Nomen difficultatis e-
rubescit.*

it is as strong and victorious as death.

Happy and safe are
they that love J E-
S U S : for that love
it is makes the diffe-
rence betwixt sincere
and false Christians,
betwixt those that
shall be heirs of sal-

*Charitas est donum
Dei quo nullum est ex-
cellentius: solum est quod
dibidit inter filios regni
eterni, & filios perdition-
is. Aug. de Trin. lib.
15. cap. 18.*

vation and those that shall go to perdition,
betwixt heaven and hell. Many priviledges
may belong to the tares while they grow in
the same field with the wheat; many Sun-
shiny days they may have, and many drops
of dew and rain may fall upon them: but
they are not rooted and grounded in love,
therefore they are plucked up and withered
and burned. Many gifts of the Divine Spirit
wicked men may receive; they may pro-
phesie and do miracles in Christs name, they
may excel in some vertues: but the grace
of Charity they never receive, the love of
God never dwells in
their hearts. " Thou

*Habere Baptismum &
malus esse potes; habere,
&c. Tract. 7. in Epist.
Johan.*

" maist be Baptized,
" (saith S. Aug.) and
" yet not be good;

" thou maist have knowledge and remain
vicious;

104 *The Reformed Monastery, Or,*

“vicious; thou maist be called a Christian,
 “and be none: but thou canst not love God
 “and be wicked; thou canst not love God,
 “but thou must be holy and happy. Thus
 we see, love affords the greatest pleasure,
 and the greatest safety this world is capable
 of. The love of *JESUS* is a precious

*Charitas est amor re-
 rum quas non nisi volen-
 tes amittimus. Aug.*

jewel, precious be-
 yond gold and the
 best of pearls: he that
 hath it, hath an infi-
 nite treasure, and it
 is so much the more to be valued, because
 we may acquiesce in its possession: we can
 never lose it except we will. We may lose
 our riches and we may lose our health; we
 may lose our learning and our eloquence;
 we may lose our friends and our lives: but
 the love of God we can never lose without

*Verum bonum illud est
 quod non potes invito
 amittere. Aug.*

our consent; no time,
 no fortune, no Tyrant
 can snatch it by force
 out of our hearts; as
 'tis never given a-
 gainst our will, so against our will it can
 never be taken away.

Quinquagesima
 Sunday.

Charity never faileth.
 “O Lord who hast
 “taught us, that all
 “our doings without charity are nothing
 “worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour
 “into our hearts that most excellent gift
 of

“ of charity, the very bond of peace and
“ of all vertues, without which whosoever
“ liveth is counted dead before thee : grant
“ this for thine only Son *J E S U S* Christs
“ sake. *Amen.*

CHAP. XXIV.

*That love brings the most lasting joy and
satisfaction to the soul.*

THE fourth and last consideration is,
that the love of God is the solid joy
and lasting Tranquillity of the Soul. No
tormenting fear or sadness can harbour in
a heart that loves God ; the Motto of love
might well be that of a late order of Knight-
hood at *Mantua*, meant of the Holy Cha-
lice, *Nihil isto triste recepto* ; grief and the
love of God are incompatible : no sadness
should enter that breast wherein dwells
Divine Love. I need not treat at large of
those many doubts and terrors concerning
future happiness which grieve and almost
distract the hearts of many Christians, to
prove that it is a happy thing to be freed
from them : there are few, but are so far
acquainted with them as readily to assent to
it ; it will be more to purpose to shew that
M the

the love of God is the best remedy against them, the best balsam to heal a wounded spirit. Some persons from their poverty, bodily pains, or other afflictions draw the most afflictive inference, that God is not their friend, and that therefore their condition is dangerous, and very bad, if not quite desperate : and this adds such weight to their cross, that they have not strength to bear it, but are ready to sink ; whereas the love of God hath enabled thousands to bear a heavier with patience, with fortitude, and even with cheerfulness. *I take pleasure in infirmities, and distresses, and necessities for Christs sake,* said S. Paul, that great lover of *JESUS*. He that would suffer for God, will suffer from God ; he that would die and be crucified for *JESUS*, will willingly bear that cross which *JESUS* lays upon his shoulders. And indeed 'tis a greater vertue, meekly, and thankfully to accept of that correction wherewith God visits us, than voluntarily to inflict the greatest sufferings on ourselves : what proceeds from God is ever best for us, and most pleasing to him. No *Patient* will question the love of that *Physician* who is his intimate friend, for that he makes incisions, and applies causticks upon him, and makes him drink bitter potions : all this he takes to be for his own good, as proceeding from his friends affection.

after this manner, he that loves God will receive afflictions from him ; and gratefully acknowledge with *David*, *I know that thy very faithfulness thou hast caused me to be troubled.* Knowing that *all things work together for the good of them that love God*, he will harbour no thoughts of diffidence, nor question Gods loving kindness to him : but rests satisfied, that while he loves God nothing can hurt him, and that whatever happens is certainly for his greater advancement.

But 'tis not always the storms of adversity that bring those dark and dismal clouds on the minds of men : they come sometimes in fair weather, in the greatest prosperity. whence 'tis in vain to examine : better it is to drive them away, for they are as mischievous as black. They cast a damp upon mens spirits ; and freeze their hearts in such a manner that they can receive no spiritual joy ; they so weaken their hands and feet, that they can hardly work for God, or walk in his ways : so that their condition is sad indeed, not because God is their enemy : Not but because they being unreasonably afraid of it, are thereby hindered from being his friends. To this evil none can prescribe a better remedy than love : let such persons love God heartily, and all these terrors will vanish way like the vain images of a terrible dream ; when one awaketh. Love begets

love, therefore we should love God, *because he first loved us*, and love begets a confidence of being loved again : so that if we love God we shall not long doubt but that we are loved by him : and then all is well. And at first, our hearts do not melt into dewy affections, and are not replenished with the sweetness and comfort of love, let us not be dismayed at it, nor too much study our own disturbed thoughts and apprehensions : but let us continue to give God demonstration of love, to abstain from what he forbids, and to do that which he commands, or that which will please him, though uncommanded : and then either holy joys and extasies will come, or it will be as well without them. No man is afraid of his friends, nor of the whom he serves and obligeth ; we can suppose that they love us, whom we love, and that they to whom we do good will be kind to us : therefore let us shew to God the love we can, and by words and actions protest that we seek to please him, and our hearts will soon be possessed with a blessed assurance that we are dear to him, and that he will never be cruel and severe to us. " reported of a Religious Person whose father " was grieved and wounded with doubts and " fears, and with sadness, that while he was " one day weeping and praying thus; O that " I were sure that I shall persevere and never " fall from God ; O that I were sure that

“God loves me, and that I shall one day see
“his blessed Face : how zealous then would
“I be in mortifying my sins and doing my
“duty ! how cheerfully would I serve God
“every day, and take pleasure in suffering
“for him ! how would I despise the world
“and its vanities, and fix my thoughts and
“affections on things above ! while he was
“thus expressing the sorrows of his troubled
“mind, he heard the whispers of a secret
“voice, which told him, *fac quod faceres*,
“do now what thou wouldst do if thou hadst
“all those assurances. With this he found
“himself so affected and refreshed, that he
“took it as an Oracle from heaven, and in
“obeying of it found those comforts he
“begged. Better counsel I cannot give thee;
fac quod faceres, do what thou wouldst do,
if thy diffident timorousness and jealousies
were confuted by a voice from heaven, and
they will soon be removed. Let thy meek
submission, thy sincere obedience, and thy
free-will offerings speak thy love to God :
and thou shalt soon find thy self perswaded
that God loves thee dearly, and that thy
condition is safe and happy. Other assu-
rance we are not to expect in this world,
and *this* is not to be obtained any other way;
should thy comfort proceed from any thing
else but thy humble and devout love to
God, it would be fanfie and presumption;
whereas so, it is well grounded and never

110. *The Reformed Monastery; Or,*

can deceive thee. *There is no fear in love* (saith Divine S. John, 1 Ep. 4. 18.) *but perfect love casteth out fear; 'tis never otherwise : grace and nature join together to make the effect infallible, that a Holy Love should ever produce a Holy Peace ; if we love indeed and in truth, thereby (not by new and secret revelations) we shall know that we are of the truth, and we shall assure our hearts before God, 1 Joh. 3. 18. Love may well work confidence and joy in our souls, for it enjoys already what it loves : it is affectuosa unitas, & unitiva affectio, love is inseparable from its object, and the essence thereof consists in their union, and in some manner unity ; as our Blessed Saviour praid for his ; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, Joh. 17. 21. and that this is effected by love, he adds ver. 26. that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. Though God be exalted infinitely above all things, in a sphere of Glory and Majesty so high that the Cherubims with their*

*Qui mente integro
Deum desiderat profecto
jam habet quem amat.
Greg. Mag.*

*many wings cannot
flie up to it ; yet thi-
ther love soars up and
takes God, and holds*

*him as his own : so that every one that
loves God is already posselt of him, and
may say wth the spouse, I am my Beloveds,
and*

and my Beloved is mine, Cant. 6. 3.

" We come to God by love, *amando non ambulando* : and to him we are united by

" by love ; *amore Deo*

" *conjugimur* : there-

" fore love is a great

" thing, (saith that

" devout father) it

" brings the soul to God with an holy con-

" fidence, and makes it trust in him, and

" cleave stedfastly to him, and rejoyce in

" him, and represent her needs and beg

" his mercies with fiducial and devout affe-

" ctions. And this is so great a truth, that

death it self with its pains and sorrows alters

nothing of it ; even then in the last agonies,

the love of God sweetens the bitter cup,

and still entertains the soul with joy and

holy comforts. " It was the saying of S. Aug.

" that because the soul hath willingly for-

" saken God whom she should love infi-

" nitely, she is forced therefore with grief

" and regret to forsake her body which she

" loves too much : and that because she

" voluntarily departed from God who is her

" life, she therefore departeth from the

" body whose life she is, with sadness and

" much reluctancy. *Aug. de Trin. lib. 4. cap. 13.*

Now we may say, that

when the soul returns

to God by love, she

is freed from this pu-

*Magna res est amor
quo anima per semet-
ipsum fiducialiter accedit
ad Deum, &c. S. Aug.*

*Charitas libertatem
donat, in morem pellit, &c.
S. Bern.*

nishment and restored to her first liberty, she is willing to die for to be with Christ : and then comes a cheerful *cupio dissolvi*, *O when shall I come and appear before God.* Happy is he who living doth so manifest his love to God by Piety and Charity, that dying he can say with *Theodosius*, *Dilexi* ; love hath been the business and delight of my life I have daily endeavoured by my actions to declare the sincerity of my love to God : he is doubtless of the number of those that love the appearing of *J E S U S* : and so he goes out to meet him with joy and confidence , expecting a kind reception from him, whom

*Nemo se amari diffidat
qui jam amat : libenter
Dei amor nostrum quem
prevenit subsequitur ,
&c. Bern.*

having not seen yet he loved, and worshipped and served affectionately. Let no man that loves God doubt of Gods Love

to him : for he that loved us when we were his enemies, so as to die for us, will much more love us when we have for him the hearty affections of friends. It is the joy of heaven, the joy of the Holy *J E S U S* when his loving kindness hath won and conquered our hearts, and 'tis our greatest joy, 'tis for us a heaven upon earth, when we love him faithfully and fervently, with all our souls and affections. The love of God brings that peace to the soul, which
the

the world can neither give nor take away.
O sweet J E S U, O look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name, Psal. 119. 132.

CHAP. XXV.

The Conclusion.

NOW who can refuse to love God, when 'tis a thing so just and reasonable, so pleasant and easie, so safe and advantageous, something of necessity we must love, every mans heart is full of that passion, and every mans life is governed by it? 'tis but considering who hath done most for us, and whom we are most obliged to love; who is most lovely, and who will best reward our love: and we shall soon understand that God is to be loved above all things, infinitely, without measure: and if we love our selves as we should, we shall easily remove our affections from the world to set them upon God and Eternity, upon *J E S U S* and his Kingdom. Love, as we have seen, will make it easie and delightful to do our duty, will make the yoke of Christ light, and enable us with strength and courage

to bear our cross cheerfully like Christians : it will lead us the shortest and the safest way to heaven, and make our journey pleasant : it will make us dear to God, and to his Saints and blessed Angels, and fill our hearts with peace and comforts : it will abide with us, when we are forsaken by the world, and all our friends can do us no good : it will accompany us when we go from hence, and open heavens gate, and enter in with us ; there to perfect our happiness which it here began : to be there our reward, as it was here our work and our duty.

I may now upon too too just an account, use the words

*Non quod ego ista
faciam dico, sed quod
facere vellem, &c. Ber.
Med.*

of S. Bernard ; what I have written is not what I do, but what I should do, what I grieve that I do not, what I endeavour to do, and what I wish all others might do. But withall I shall plead for my self the advice of a Greek

*Μὴ δὲ λείπει πικρὸς
διδασκὴς ἢ λὺγρον
γάλα διδασκόντων,
ἐξ αὐτῶν, &c.
Joh. Clim. grad. 26.
S. 18.*

Father ; not to judge too severely of those who teach excellent lessons, great and profitable truths which they themselves learn and practise but very imperfectly : because the

the usefulness of their instructions may make some amends for the defects of their performance. Ephes. 6. 24. *Grace be with all them that love our LORD J E S U S C H R I S T in sincerity.* Amen.

F I N I S.

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THE
CONTENTS
OF THE
FIRST PART.

The Introduction Pag. 1.

CHAP. I.

Of the general Benefits of God to mankind, and first of Creation. 2

CHAP. II.

How much we are obliged to God for our Preservation. 5

CHAP. III.

Of the positive Blessings of this life. 8

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. IV.

What returns we should make for temporal Blessings. 10

CHAP. V.

Of the mercies of Redemption, and first, a consideration of the infinite miseries we were redeemed from. 12

CHAP. VI.

How graciously and wonderfully we were redeemed. 19

CHAP. VII.

A consideration of the Cross in its four dimensions. 23

CHAP. VIII.

The breadth of the Cross, or the manifold Sufferings of Christ for our Redemption. 25

CHAP. IX.

The length of the Cross. 29

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. X.

The depth of the Cross. 31

CHAP. XI.

The height of the Cross. 33

CHAP. XII.

What an infinite love is exprest by the Cross. 35

CHAP. XIII.

Of the eternal happiness merited for us by the Cross of Christ, and measured by it. 37

CHAP. XIV.

That the mercies of our Redemption challenge our love and hearty obedience. 42

CHAP. XV.

An invitation to enter the Cloister of Love. 44

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. XVI.

*The Vow to be taken at the entrance of
Loves Monastery.* 47

CHAP. XVII.

*Considerations of the nature of Love, and
first of Self-love.* 50

CHAP. XVIII.

*That the Love of J E S U S requires
we should mortifie self-love.* 55

CHAP. XIX.

*How great a vertue is Divine Charity,
or the Love of God.* 58

CHAP. XX.

*That love always pursues what it thinks
good, and is never satisfied till it hath
obtained it.* 62

CHAP. XXI.

*That Love is strong and effective, and
sweetens all labours.* 66

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. XXII.

A farewell to all sinful desires. 70

CHAP. XXIII.

That the love of JESUS and the love of Sin can never consist together. 76

CHAP. XXIV.

Of outward helps and instruments of love and obedience. 78

CHAP. XXV.

A passionate Meditation on the Passion of our Blessed Saviour. 83

CHAP. XXVI.

Of a sincere amendment which must be wrought by proper means. 88

CHAP. XXVII.

Love the best instrument of Self-Reformation and true penitence, with an act of hearty contrition. 92

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. XXVIII.

That Love will sweeten as well as produce the truest penitence : and that true wisdom, not melancholy is the guide of sincere penitents. 98

CHAP. XXIX.

That severities and mortifications well regulated, are subservient to Repentance, and the Love of J E S U S. 103

CHAP. XXX.

A short Meditation for penitential days. 105

CHAP. XXXI.

That repentance must look forward, to the securing of our duty for the time to come. With instances and resolutions to that effect. 108

CHAP. XXXII.

A singular example of humane Love, with a short reflection upon it. 113
CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Some Scriptures to shew the necessity of departing from Sin, according to our Baptismal Vow. With some protestations to conclude this first Part. 116

THE
CONTENTS
OF THE
SECOND PART.

CHAP. I.

That Love obligeth us also to fulfil the positive part of our Baptismal Vow; with a protestation of obedience to it. 1

CHAP. II.

How great a happiness in Eternity follows our love and obedience. 5

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. III.

*That to win our hearts and duty, God
propounds great rewards to us.* 8

CHAP. IV.

*That Love hath a secret pleasure, and
reward in it self; with a meditation
to that purpose.* 11

CHAP. V.

*Reflections on the vanity of temporal
things; with some holy resolves and
ejaculations.* 14

CHAP. VI.

*That Christ having bought us, hath
now a just title to our love and service.* 18

CHAP. VII.

*How much we are ingaged to serve our
Blessed Lord; with renewed promises
to do it faithfully.* 20

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. VIII.

Meditation to excite us to a sincere and fervent love. 23

CHAP. IX.

Christianity absolutely requires our love and strictest obedience. 28

CHAP. X.

Considerations to encourage us in the discharge of our Christian duty; with a caution to the Reader. 32

CHAP. XI.

That Love will prompt us to free-will offerings, and thinks it never doth enough. 36

CHAP. XII.

That our obedience to the Church, is an excellent expression of our love to Christ. 43

CHAP. XIII.

Of several voluntary Oblations. 46

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. XIV.

*The true notion of Free-will Offerings
vindicated, with an Exhortation to
abound in the work of the Lord.* 50

CHAP. XV.

*Meditation on the Exaltation of the Bless-
ed J E S U S.* 57

CHAP. XVI.

*Two general directions about the mani-
festing of our love to God.* 62

CHAP. XVII.

*The two former Rules explained and
enlarged.* 68

CHAP. XVIII.

*Some more particular directions how to
order our lives by the love of J E-
S U S.* 74

CHAP. XIX.

*That upon all accounts, God should be
loved above all things.* 78

CHAP.

The Contents.

CHAP. XX.

*That as it is most just, so it is most easie
to love God.* 84

CHAP. XXI.

*An Objection answered, which might
be raised against this Book and its
Subject.* 88

CHAP. XXII.

*The second Objection concerning the love
of J E S U S, answered.* 91

CHAP. XXIII.

*That it is most pleasant and safe to love
God.* 97

CHAP. XXIV.

*That love brings the most lasting joy and
satisfaction to the soul.* 105

CHAP. XXV.

The Conclusion. 113

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